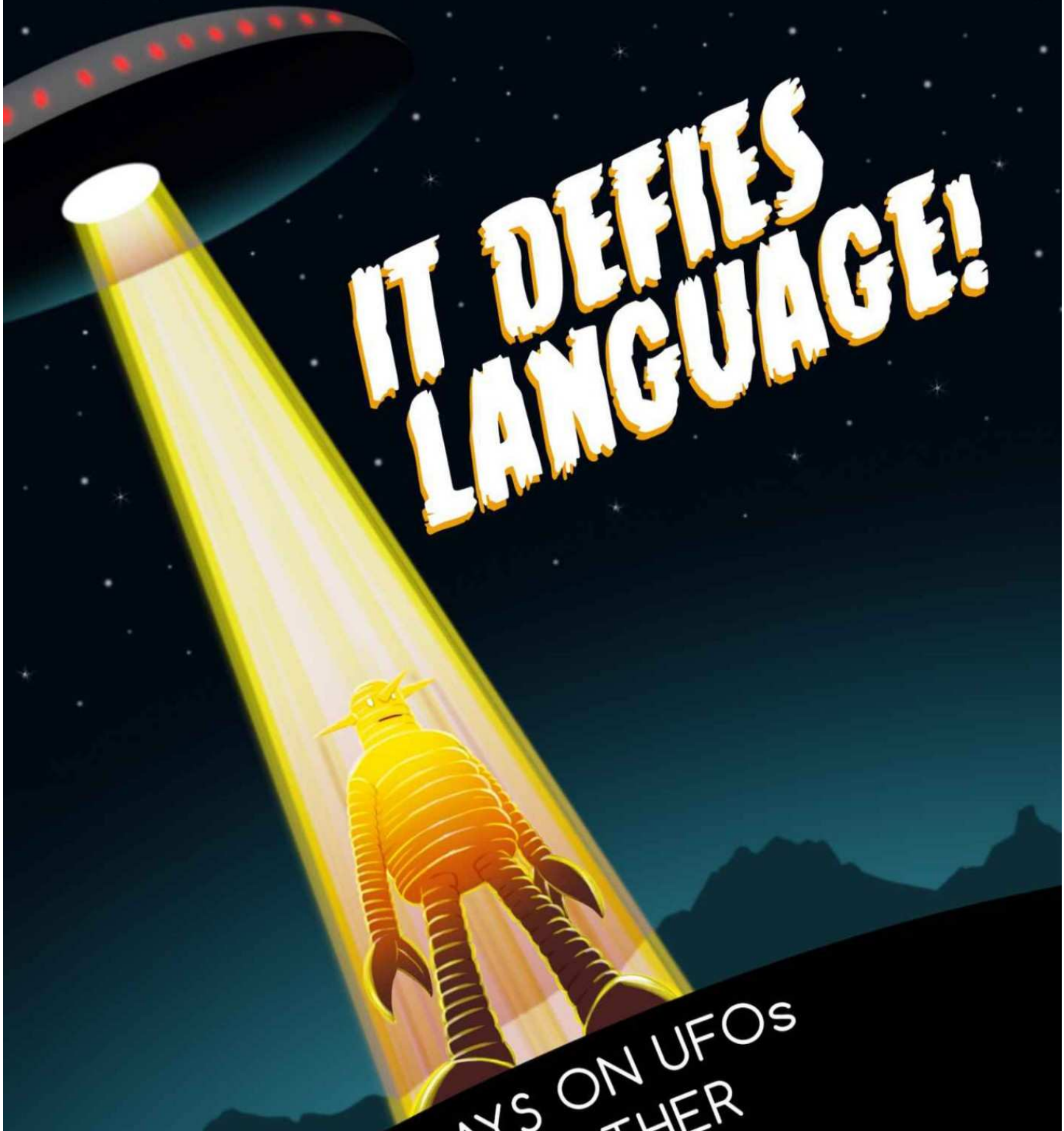
GREG BISHOP

IT DEFIES LANGUAGE!



ESSAYS ON UFOs and OTHER WEIRDNESS

IT DEFIES LANGUAGE!

ESSAYS ON UFOs and OTHER WEIRDNESS

By Greg Bishop

Illustrations by “Red Pill Junkie”

Excluded Middle Press – Los Angeles

Praise for *It Defies Language!*

Greg Bishop is like a stalker. He lurks in Ufological alleys, watching, listening, trying to separate the noise from the signal. Unlike many in this field who seem to feed off of attention and publicity, Greg keeps a low profile--by design. Every once in awhile, he emerges from the shadows and dazzles us with keen insight and meticulously documented findings. And he's been doing this for more than 25 years. This is an important book written by a guy who is not merely an observer of the UFO scene, but a major participant who has been on the front lines of the biggest and most controversial stories of the last quarter century. I worry that it might make him a household name. He deserves the recognition but fame could totally screw up his preferred M.O.

George Knapp – Investigative Reporter, KLAS TV

Greg Bishop's latest book is an eclectic mash-up of esoteric thought that asks more questions than it answers, which makes it a must-read gem not only for committed Forteans but also for anyone interested in an honest discussion about the weird world in which we live."

Paul Kimball, JD – Filmmaker / Author

Greg Bishop a 'next level' thinker who sees the UFO phenomenon and its accompanying ephemera from a unique and priceless perspective that is sorely needed in this field of study.

Tim Binnall – Host, *Binnall Of America*

Take an insider's tour of the strange world of UFO study. How much does the government know about UFOs? How much does it care? What kinds of people are attracted to the subject and what are they like? Deeper cuts include historical perspectives on the subject, as well as opinions on how most of the current search for answers about UFOs are misguided and antiquated, and some suggestions on how this might change. Along with essays about square craters on the Moon, black-eyed kids, and baseball at Area 51, at the end of this book, you too will be shouting "*It Defies Language!*"

Greg Bishop has written extensively on UFOs and the paranormal, and has three previously published titles on these subjects. His long-running interview show can be accessed at radiomisterioso.com. He lives in Los Angeles.

It Defies Language!

© 2016 by Excluded Middle Press and Greg Bishop. All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced, copied, or used in any form or manner whatsoever without written permission, except in the case of brief quotations in reviews and critical articles.

For information, contact Excluded Middle Press and Greg Bishop at info@itdefieslanguage.com

Cover design and illustration by Red Pill Junkie
Author photo by T.S. Kitty

First Edition

“When you cut into the present, the future leaks out”

–William S. Burroughs

CONTENTS

Foreword by Nick Redfern
Introduction

1
You Play The Game, Or You Get Nothing – Government, Spies, Etc.
UFO Researchers and the U.S. Government
Was Bill Moore A CIA Agent?
Jamie Shandera And Proof Of UFOs
The (UFO) Aviary
Who Keeps The UFO Secrets?
David Lynch, Twin Peaks, and UFOs (and the Government)
Movie Spies Vs. Real Spies
The Culture of Lies
SERPO Was A Big Fat Fake
SERPO Post Generates Debate
Plasma Ball UFOs Over New Mexico
Uncle Sam and UFOs
Underground Bases
Was He Killed For Talking About Alien Bases?
Alien Shot At Area 51!
Next Generation Stealth Technology As UFOs
A UFO That Acted Like A Rocket

2
I Was There! I Swear! – First Person Stuff
Crazy Talk
A Strange Dream
What's an "Excluded Middle" And Why Should I Care?
Three Psychic Experiences
My Own "UFO" Sighting
My Truly Unexplained (So Far) Sighting
Dr. Richard Strassman And DMT Aliens

On The Road With The “Mirage Men”
Dulce The Same But Not The Same
Working On A Movie
Was That A Piece of A UFO?

3

People Make This World – Friends, Historical Figures, Weirdos and Others

William S. Burroughs, Whitley Strieber, and UFOs
Whatever Happened To “Klark Kent: Super Science?”
“Long” John Nebel: The Art Bell of the 1950s
Visiting A Gravesite
Mac Tonnies Gone
Pamela Stonebrooke: Queen Of The Reptilians
Remembering Karla Turner
Erik Beckjord Has Left The Building
Howard Menger Passes
The Alien Art of David Huggins
John Keel 1930-2009
Gabe Valdez Passes
Remembering Gray Barker
Woody Derenberger, Hamburgers, and Indrid Cold

4

Doomed to Repeat It – Historical Perspectives

The 20 Most Important Dates In Ufology
Those Damned Cattle Mutilations
When UFO Prophecy Fails
Heaven’s Gate – 10 Years Ago Today
Was The “Father Gill” Sighting A Classified Aircraft?
Beer And UFOs
The World’s First UFO Crash
Los Angeles Air Raid of 1942: Wartime Jitters or UFOs?
UFO Book From 1871
What About Female UFO Contactees?

Mollie Thompson: “From Worlds Afar”
Messenger Of Deception
Is Roswell In The Eye Of The Beholder?
Cleric Reports “Gentle Little People” Invading Home
Missing Millionaire Aviator Captured by Aliens
Close Encounters of the Non-Humanoid Kind

5

Weirdness Unbound – Other Phenomena
The “Orbs” Controversy
Square Craters On The Moon
Suspension of Psychic Belief
The “Rods” Controversy
Bigfoot and UFOs
Crop Circles - Hoax Or Hex?
Crop Circle Science
Were The Nazca Lines Created By Astral Projection?
UFOs and Earthquake Lights
Black-Eyed Kids
Hauntings and Curses Of California

6

Everybody Has One – Opinions
Why Should Anyone Be Interested In UFOs?
Ufology: What’s The Point?
How Should Ufology Be Changed?
The Strange Case of the Unrepentant UFO Researchers
Inconvenient Facts About Abductions
A UFO Report In Every Crowd
Penn & Teller – Masters Of Deception
UFO Fact vs. UFO Theory
Skepticism Is Not A Dirty Word
Fence Sitting on UFO Contact
The Less Sense It Makes, The More True It Is
Anti-Structure In Ufology

“Unproveable” UFOs?
Blurry Photos, Videos, and More Damn Sighting Reports
UFOs Spitting Flames
Alien Evolution, Alien Motivation
UFOs in Renaissance Paintings Explained
Getting Rich And Famous From UFOs
Fortean Intermediatism and Indeterminacy
Response To A Review of *Project Beta*
Alien Photos
Are We Being Lied To?
From Belief to Knowing
Intelligent Design, Or Nature?
What Is the Question?
How Should “Disclosure” Be Handled?
Platform For UFO Disclosure
What The Thinker Thinks…
ET Go Home

7

Throwing Stuff At The Wall/ Running It Up The Flagpole etc. – Theory
Dad, Where Do UFOs Come From?
Where Might Aliens Come From?
Making UFO Sense Often Sucks
Are UFOs A Cosmic Art Project?
UFO Belief And Cognitive Dissonance
Insidious Creatures Of The Imaginal Realm
Why Don’t Aliens Freak People Out?
Alien Brains, Alien Thoughts
UFOs As Agents Of Deconstruction
“Mary’s Room” And UFO Witness Testimony
Aliens And Drugs
Objectivity As An Enemy Of UFO Study
The UFO “Repeaters” Phenomenon
Bigfoot and UFOs and the Electromagnetic Spectrum
Cosmic Art Project Part 2: The Co-Creation Hypothesis

8

Connections, Conspiracies, and Cut-Ups

The Name Game

More Name Games

Conspiracy Corner

UFO Cut-Ups

Baseball At Area 51

E.T. Play Ball

Laughter Spells Death

The Lucifer Project

Jacques Vallée On Mind Control

Ethnic Weapons For Ethnic Cleansing

Bilderburger Beer!

9

Secret Codes From Space – Alien Writing

An Introduction To “Alien Writing”

Dr. Mario Pazzaglini: A Modern-Day Magus

Jesse Marcel Jr.’s Roswell Alien Symbols

Recent Alien Writing Examples

Asemic Texts = Alien Writing?

Thank Yous

Foreword By Nick Redfern

Back in 2006, Greg Bishop and I were invited to take part in a new online venture of the ufological kind by the name of UFOMystic. Basically, it was a blog where Greg and I were given free rein to write about whatever crossed our minds, providing it was on the subject of UFOs. And, for several years, we did exactly that–and pretty much on a daily basis, too. Our content ranged from reviews to articles, and news items to lengthy features, the latter sometimes split over a couple of days. But, as is the case with all things, UFOMystic ultimately came to an end and the site was closed down. Now, however, and in a fashion, it's back.

When, some months ago, Greg called to let me know he had secured the rights to all of his old UFOMystic material, I told him that was great news. It's *still* great news! Over the several years that Greg wrote for the site, we got to see some of his best, most thought-provoking, work. Collectively, it challenged the reader to confront new and radical concepts when it came to the UFO enigma. It offered alternative scenarios for classic cases. But, most important of all, it made people think outside of what passes for the ufological box. And to think carefully, too.

I first met Greg back in 1998, at the Laughlin, Nevada-based UFO Congress. I was, however, already quite familiar with his early work. Back in the nineties, I used to regularly receive Greg's *The Excluded Middle* magazine from the late Bob Girard's Arcturus Books. Then, in 2005, we were treated to *Project Beta*; it was a full-length study from Greg of the controversy-filled Paul Bennewitz "Dulce Base" saga. In other words, Greg has had a longstanding involvement in Ufology–often at the heart of it. All of which made him the ideal person for UFOMystic.

If this is your first exposure to Greg's work for UFOMystic, you're in for a major treat. And if you're someone who read Greg's work first time around, well, you're still in for a treat. As well as the original now-hard-to-find content, Greg has brought completely new material to the table, too–

none of which disappoints, and all of which adds something extremely valuable to the UFO debate.

So, what you have here, from the UFOMystic days, is Greg on a roll, flowing with thoughts and ideas; not thoughts and ideas that he just wanted to share, but, arguably, that he *needed* to share. This is Greg inspired; *this is Greg on fucking fire*. Now, go read.

–Nick Redfern

Introduction

Some people build model railroads. Others collect stamps or bottlecaps. I write and think about UFOs. Since 1999, I have also hosted an interview show, mostly on that subject (available at radiomisterioso.com). These activities may be no more or less useful than any other hobby, and sometimes a hobby can take over your life and become more than just a way to pass the time. I am lucky to have a few fans of my hobby, which was a fringe benefit and was not planned at all. I have very few enemies, at least any that ever bother me. As time goes on, I care less what those whom I do not like or respect think about me. It's taken me longer than many people to realize this.

Interviews often begin with, "How did you get interested in this subject?" As far as I know, it began when I was graduating from children's books to wider fare, probably at about 8-10 years of age. To encourage us to read, my father would take my sister and I to the nearest library and tell us to check out as many books as we could read in a week. It took me a year or two to go through all the UFO, ESP, Bigfoot and Loch Ness Monster and ghost books. There is no clue as to why these were the titles that attracted me, but it didn't matter to my dad what we read, as long as we were reading.

Drinking, partying and other high school and college activities pushed the monsters and mysteries out of my life until I had an almost suicidal depression in my mid-20s. At that point, I thought I had a choice to either kill myself or decide if I would try a "winner script" as writer Robert Anton Wilson suggested in one of his books. This exercise is to simply decide that everything is going to work out and that you have the power to change those things in your life that you do not like. It takes a little time.

Within a couple of years, I was so busy with projects that I had no time to think constant negative thoughts. I met (now infamous) UFO researcher Bill Moore, who encouraged me with his exciting ideas. He seemed to know everyone in the UFO biz. At the time, he was also heavily involved

with spies and intelligence people, but did not talk about it much. Just the year before, he announced the discovery of one of the most well-known (now anyway) government/UFO documents which eventually became known as the "MJ-12" papers. Much more excitement was to come (which is covered herein.)

In 1991, I met two people who would become lifelong friends: Robert Larson and Peter Stenshoel. We pooled our resources and talents and started a small-press magazine called *The Excluded Middle*, named for the vast unexplored realm between belief and non-belief in and about weird subjects that seemed to exist at the time (and still does.) We published articles and features on conspiracies, UFOs, psychedelic drugs, strange creatures and spirit/ consciousness. We met and talked to many wonderful and intelligent people. Some of them changed my life and thinking forever. Some became close friends and deep inspirations. It was like putting myself through another sort of higher education. I also started writing on a consistent basis.

In 2000, an anthology of the magazine (called *Wake Up Down There!*) was published by David Hatcher Childress' Adventures Unlimited Press. It was my first book. Three years later I was tasked to write a book dealing partially with Bill Moore's controversial actions in the 1980s UFO research community. That title was *Project Beta*. It was a non-fiction spy thriller with trappings of the UFO subject and told the tragic story of Paul Bennewitz, a researcher who got too close to certain black projects and had to be directed away by elements of the US military and intelligence community who encouraged his delusions and provided a few more until the poor man went a little off the rails for awhile. The experience of writing and researching for that volume gave me a glimpse of the strange world of intelligence operations and how UFO fans and writers were (and occasionally still are) used to spread stories for a purpose other than releasing government secrets. They are also sometimes used to inadvertently gather information on people and things that affect national security. This is covered in detail in chapter One.

On the coattails of *Project Beta*, I lucked into writing a majority of the book *Weird California*, which was part of a book series examining strange phenomena, locations, and people from across the United States. To be paid for something that I wanted to do anyway was a revelation.

People who write (and are published) and who do it for long time often build up a hoard of work that either falls out of print or (these days)

disappears into the cyber ether. From December of 2006 until my last post in September of 2011, UFOmystic.com was the place I used to keep myself in writing practice, stay current on the latest paranormal news, and most importantly to me, work out ideas and theories about the UFO subject. The material from that site forms the bulk of this volume, since the articles are difficult or impossible to find at this time, and the original site has been cybersquatted out of existence.

Many people ask, "Do you believe in UFOs?" This question is so loaded with semantic baggage that it is meaningless. Belief implies a lack of critical thinking. UFOs are automatically assumed by most to be structured vehicles piloted by intelligent beings from other planets. They don't need to be. As you will see, there are many reasons that a skeptical mindset and a lack of assumptions make the subject far more interesting and worthy of serious consideration. To settle on one explanation is to shut down inquiry on something that is as multifaceted as there are witnesses and people who are interested in the subject.

There are a few concepts that I currently use as working models for the study of UFOs. In essence, these ideas are not original to me, and have been dealt with in other forms by other people:

–There is an as-yet unknown, non-human intelligence or consciousness that interacts with us from time to time, and probably has been for the entire history of humanity.

–There is no real, verifiable evidence that UFOs and apparent associated beings come from other planets.

–Beliefs, psychology, cultural bias and many other intangibles determine what we remember when we have an encounter with the unknown–the memories become the data points. We wrap our metaphors around the experience and encode it with language.

–Through retelling and recall, the original experience is continuously extrapolated until it probably bears little resemblance what actually happened. This may occur within the first few minutes after the event.

–UFO and paranormal researchers are determining the nature of the phenomenon by studying it and interviewing witnesses, etc. while front-loading their bias.

–Encounters with the unknown, if they are truly the result of an external stimulus (which may be conscious or intelligent) could be over 90% witness-created. That is, we are probably mixing our expectations with the intent (or lack of intent) of any non-human consciousness.

In most of the opinion and theory essays I was working out these scenarios for myself with the help of the many commenters at the site who pointed out lapses of judgment or holes in my arguments. At this point, I think that much of the mystery of UFOs is the mystery of how we perceive and remember things that don't fit into our worldview or are psychologically traumatizing events, or both.

When you are interested in this stuff, you will quickly find other people who are as well. Like any group, it has its heroes, villains, smart people, dumb people, true believers and heretics. The personality who is interested in UFOs is also often fascinated with other strange phenomena like ESP, ghosts, crop circles, cryptozoology etc., although when folks get to a certain level of interest they tend to specialize. They also tend to denigrate others who have chosen to look at other mysteries. The Bigfoot researcher often has disdain for the ghost hunter, who thinks the Ufologist is no better than a fanboy. This is unfortunate, since there are definite connections between them. One example is the apparent distortion of reality experienced by witnesses to all of these phenomena–the so-called "Oz factor." There is also the possibility that our concept of time is temporarily suspended during some paranormal encounters.

Amidst the theorizing and criticism at UFOmystic, there were also short pieces on crop circles, parapsychology, strange coincidences/ synchronicities, and strange or funny characters I met or heard about. There were also musings on such things as a baseball diamond at Area 51, earthquake lights, and square craters on the Moon. The last chapter consists of my thoughts and some limited research on the phenomenon of "alien writing," which are symbols that people recall from close encounters, or are

apparently directly downloaded into their awareness from what they claim is an external source.

If you have any interest in the subjects in this book, you should be able to follow along with little backgrounding. There has been some editing throughout to keep the issues, people and concepts up to date and relevant and to correct factual errors. Those who have encountered my writing or listened to my podcast may find insights to things that I have mentioned before. This is not "UFOs 101." Most of the articles include the original date of posting or publication. References are provided where they could be located, since some of the sites that were linked to six or eight years ago no longer exist.

A few of the entries in this book appear for the first time:

Chapter 6: "The Strange Case of the Unrepentant UFO Researchers" as well as a response to a negative review of *Project Beta*

Chapter 5: "Hauntings and Curses of California"

The article entitled "Crazy Talk" which leads off Chapter 2 as well as "UFOs As A Cosmic Art Project – Part 2: The Co-Creation Hypothesis" (Chapter 7) were written specifically for this book.

Chapter 8: "Laughter Spells Death" was a piece I read live on Robert Larson's *Out The Rabbit Hole* radio show in 2011.

Enjoy and please contact me with any feedback or comments.

Greg Bishop
Los Angeles, October 2015

For the ebook edition, there are 21 new entries, added at the end of each chapter, and a new illustration:

Chapter 1:
A UFO That Acted Like A Rocket

Chapter 2:
Was That A Piece of a UFO?

Chapter 3:
Remembering Gray Barker
Woody Derenberger, Hamburgers, and Indrid Cold

Chapter 4:
What About Female UFO Contactees?
Mollie Thompson: “From Worlds Afar”
Messenger Of Deception
Is Roswell In The Eye Of The Beholder?
Cleric Reports “Gentle Little People” Invading Home
Missing Millionaire Aviator Captured by Aliens
Close Encounters of the Non-Humanoid Kind

Chapter 5:
An amazing illustration by Red Pill Junkie originally produced for the entry on earthquake lights featuring filmmaker Paul Kimball and Morrissey, one of his fave musicians. (This accompanies the article, not at the end of the chapter.)

Chapter 6:
Alien Photos
Are We Being Lied To?
From Belief to Knowing
Intelligent Design, Or Nature?
What Is the Question?
How Should “Disclosure” Be Handled?
Platform For UFO Disclosure
What The Thinker Thinks…
ET Go Home

Chapter 8:
Script for “Bilderburger Beer” Commercial

1 - You Play The Game, Or You Get Nothing: Government, Spies, etc.

In 1987, I was working in an office that turned out to be one block from UFO researcher Bill Moore's office/residence just off Hollywood Boulevard. I was looking for a subject for a video project. When I discovered that Moore was so close, and would soon be speaking at a conference in Los Angeles, I rang him up. He said to come by and we'd talk.

We signed an agreement to record his lecture and split the profits. The resulting presentation, UFOs: At The Turning Point *also featured government document scholar Stanton Friedman and abduction researcher Budd Hopkins. We probably made less than 50 dollars on the tapes, but Moore and I remained in touch, and eventually became friends.*

Much later, I found out that he was in contact at the time with government personnel who were apparently leaking UFO information to

him and a few other researchers in exchange for some light intelligence work, most of which involved acting as a neutral and independent courier of information through mail and phone messaging. In essence, he was an unpaid civilian spy who was conveniently untraceable as a government employee. He would also provide his contacts with information on what researchers knew about possible secret government programs that were mistaken as UFO sightings.

In 1989, he blew the whistle on himself with a speech at the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON) national convention in Las Vegas. Amidst catcalls, weeping and other emotional outbursts from the audience, Moore detailed what he'd been up to. The audience saw it as a betrayal of their trust in his integrity as a colleague. Moore described the saga of Paul Bennewitz, a UFO researcher whose perceptions were controlled by a group of intelligence agencies for about 5 years in order to keep him away from sensitive projects at Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque

Moore watched while Bennewitz went slowly downhill psychologically and ended up in a mental health facility for a couple of months as a result. Bennewitz was unstable before the government took an interest, but as he edged ever closer to a breakdown, the tradeoff of cover for black projects was deemed more important than his mental state by those in charge of security. The events surrounding this period are detailed in my 2005 book Project Beta.

Moore's reputation never recovered after the speech, and he didn't seem to care, as he dropped out of the UFO field a couple of years later. "I learned a lot of things, but I never found out how much the government knows about the subject" he told me later.

While working on Project Beta*, I had the chance to talk to a few former intelligence and military people, whom I found fascinating and not a little intimidating at times. They played the intelligence game with me, sometimes using me as a go-between for information that might answer some of their old questions about many subjects. I often knew that this was going on, but probably not always. All were as helpful as they could be under the circumstances, but would rebuff my questions or change the subject when they were close to violating any secrets they still might hold. To me, this was far more interesting than anything that they might know about UFOs. The currency of spies is information, and if you don't have what they need, you*

will only get to a certain point. Occasionally I was able to help them and more stories and leads would develop.

As a result, I became interested in the intelligence game, how to play it, and what happens to those who do. They always hold the cards, and to get anything, you have to play the game.

UFO Researchers and the U.S. Government
7/31/2007

In his infamous 1989 speech to the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON), Bill Moore told the assembled cognoscenti of ufology that they'd been had by elements of U.S. counterintelligence. Amidst surprised gasps and shouts of derision, he explained that he knew this because he was in the middle of it. A MUFON official had to interrupt more than once to restore order.

It was very dramatic and I didn't quite know what all the fuss was about, since I had just jumped into the civilian UFO research field through personal contact with Moore a couple of years earlier. I had a unique opportunity to grill him whenever I wanted to about his motivations for making a deal with the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI), and by extension, other groups like the CIA, and the Defense Intelligence Agency.

In a recent interview with Moore, I asked him if he would do it all over again. Not surprisingly, he said that he would. He also remembered that the "deal" was not as cut and dried as most would expect. Like any agreement without a written contract, the party holding the power will introduce more distasteful elements slowly, and we all know who controls the conversation in any deal with the government. You can keep playing, or drop out and get nothing.

Moore has said that he knew that other researchers were playing this game. He has yet to identify who those "others" were, since he says that they are still living, and it's not his place to "out" people who have decided to keep quiet. Considering the derision still lurking in the field, this isn't surprising, but how well-placed is this hatred for perceived "turncoats?"

In a recent email exchange with author/researcher Richard Dolan, I was reminded of a passage in my book *Project Beta* that concerns one of the most sainted ufologists of all time. Dr. Josef Allen Hynek probably did

more than anyone else in the field to bring the subject before a wider audience and give it some measure of respect among his scientific peers. What many do not know is that Hynek, a former employee of the U.S. Air Force, was apparently kept on retainer with the USAF long after his involvement with Project Blue Book. In this capacity, he might have been asked about anything that was puzzling the Air Force on the subject of UFOs, and even astronomy, which was his main field of academic study. This might seem innocent enough, except for one incident, which I am still trying to confirm. While researching the book, Moore told me that in 1980, Hynek had done something that would chill the bones of any serious ufologist.

In 1980, Paul Bennewitz was trying to figure out what he was hearing on his home-built radio receiver, with its antenna array pointed at the Kirtland Air Force Base and the NSA's coded microburst tests. With his knowledge of electronics, he was just beginning to figure out what was zipping into his DIY master control maze, which had almost filled his den and was starting to spill into the bedroom. His home-built computers and software were reeling off a frightening array of alien transmissions. Because of his special relationship with the Air Force, he told them what he was picking up, and what he thought it was.

The fact that he believed the transmissions were coded messages from UFOs concerning an imminent takeover of the planet did not interest Kirtland security as much as the fact that he had been able to get as far as he did. This meant that any reasonably savvy engineer could in theory crack codes that had most likely taken months or years to develop. Armed with Bennewitz' unfailing trust in their motivations, the powers decided to help him by leading him further down the UFO path.

To this end, an unnamed computer scientist was hired to write a program specifically for Bennewitz. Instead of words like "telemetry," "range," and "target," others were substituted. The same signals would now spit out things like "aliens," "home planet," and "death ray."

Now, the whole thing needed to be delivered to Bennewitz' doorstep.

Bill Moore claims that he met up with Dr. Hynek at the 1982 MUFON convention, and over a couple of beers at a nearby bar, Hynek admitted that he was the one who had been assigned to give the bogus computer setup to Bennewitz. He also said that it was one of the last tasks he was asked to perform for the Air Force.

I tried to check this story out with the Center For UFO Studies, but the management didn't seem to find anything on Bennewitz in Hynek's files, or perhaps didn't bother to look, although I dogged them for months. If someone can confirm the story, I would be grateful

If true, this throws a new light on the sort of dealings that some major ufologists may go through in order to keep a line of communication (however tainted) open to authorities who can push the right buttons and make the right calls when they are needed.

It may come as surprise to many readers that not all government people are evil disinformationalists, but the manna thrown from the intelligence heavens must always be checked for rot. Those who choose to see things in black and white are most likely not willing to listen when the message is not something they want to hear. This is unfortunate, as many former (and some active) intelligence personnel are just as interested in getting at the truth about UFOs as the rest of us.

Was Bill Moore A CIA Agent?
4/16/2009

More than a few people have informed me that UFO researcher Bill Moore was a CIA agent.

This accusation is apparently based on inference rather than verifiable facts. Moore was teaching drama and English at a high school in Minnesota in 1977, but by 1979 he had written *The Philadelphia Experiment* along with famed paranormal author Charles Berlitz. It has been claimed that this is a suspiciously short time for Moore to have gotten involved in any sort of writing. One posting read, "Soon after meeting [Stanton] Friedman Moore became the author of *The Roswell Incident*, even though Friedman was much more qualified to write such a book, having done the lion's share of research on Roswell."[1] Sure, if by "soon" you mean three years.

Moore used information from Friedman (specifically interviews with Jesse Marcel) but actually did much of the research for the book, traveling to Roswell many times in 1979 to interview witnesses for the first time since 1947. Berlitz was hired as co-author due to the small success of *The Philadelphia Experiment*, and his name recognition with the reading public. This was a condition imposed by the publisher, Grosset and Dunlap. Berlitz

took the information from Moore and Friedman and shaped it into a book on a tight deadline. The post also refers to Friedman's "nervous denial" in response to inquiries about Moore. Is the perceived nervousness (inferred from written statements, not interviews) due to shadowy CIA connections, or the fact that Moore and Friedman had a contentious falling out for many years?

If we should be suspicious of anyone it is perhaps Berlitz, who spent many years as an Army Intelligence agent working for the OSS, which later became the CIA. In a letter, Karl Pflock wrote about Berlitz in the March 15, 2004 issue of the UFO journal *Saucer Smear*:

> Since The Field's usually watchful paranoids dropped the ball or were too frightened to pick it up, I decided Something Must De Done. I contacted one of my many Reliable Sources, a man who knew Berlitz very well. Here's what he said:
>
> He was a Lt. Col., I think. Served from about 1940 until maybe just after Korea. Most of his wartime service was in South America (Argentina, Brazil) socializing with, and keeping tabs on, the various pro-Nazi factions in that region. As such, he fell under the purview of the OSS, the Army group that would later become the CIA. I recall him once telling me about getting picked up by some other American agents and having a devil of a time convincing them he was one of them. After the war, I think he went to Europe to train Army language instructors in the 'Berlitz method.'

Pflock, however, had a long career with the CIA, so what are we going to believe? Pflock was quite helpful to me during the writing of *Project Beta*, giving me information on people who I wanted to talk to in New Mexico and elsewhere, and not only former intel personnel. Was there a grand conspiracy to keep me from the truth as well? I sincerely doubt it.

Granted, the accusation about Moore quoted at the beginning of this article was posted in 2001, but the author has made no effort to update his information. Other suspicions concerning Moore I have seen, such as "Unknown to the public is the fact that Bill Moore was recruited as an agent of the CIA" is quoted from an uncredited post.

We must also look at the suspicions surrounding Moore and his motivations for writing *The Roswell Incident*. If he (and Berlitz) wrote it at

the behest of the CIA, what was the reason? Why start rumors about an old UFO crash? What did this accomplish besides a headache for the Air Force, who had to officially deny the alien rumors not once, but twice? Were all the witnesses interviewed by Moore (and later Kevin Randle and Don Schmitt) in collusion with the government? Is the whole Roswell mythos built on an old disinformation operation? What light does this throw on the premise of Nick's book *Body Snatchers In The Desert*, which proposed that Roswell was a flight test with captured WWII soldiers?

Unfounded extrapolation of "puzzling evidence" is rampant in the conspiracy and UFO communities, and almost guarantees that no one with any authority will ever take the information seriously. Not that anyone would really be interested in the internal squabbles of the UFO research community anyway.

If someone has documented evidence that Moore was involved in an official capacity with the CIA, I'd like to see it. If the association was unofficial, there would of course be no record, and the matter will remain open. Personally, I do think that he did have had some contact with the spy agency, if only through the shadowy figure known as "Falcon," who was the head of a (possibly CIA) operation designed to flush out Soviet spies working in the U.S. in the late 1970s through the mid-1980s. In this sense, he was ostensibly working for the Agency, but not as an "agent." Of course, people will use this fact to throw out the baby with the bathwater, but this makes the baby much more interesting, at least to me.

I suppose I am engaging in inference as well, but it's primarily based on talking to some of the principals involved, not a fixed belief system or suspicions about things I've read on the internet. You play the game or you don't. If the game scares you away, you don't have a chance to win, or learn how it's played.

[1] http://www.mail-archive.com/ctrl@listserv.aol.com/msg66573.html

Jamie Shandera And Proof Of UFOs
2/01/2007

In December of 1984, Jamie Shandera, (pronounced JAY-mee SHAN-dehr-ay) a Los Angeles television producer, received a manila package on his doorstep. He and writer/researcher Bill Moore were looking into government knowledge of UFOs. Moore made a deal with elements of U.S. intelligence community that was supposed to net him classified documents and information in exchange for his services as a "mole" in the UFO community, among other duties. The package was not delivered with the regular mail, even though it bore a postmark from Albuquerque, New Mexico. Shandera had already retrieved his other mail when he heard his screen door closing and found a bulky envelope in the space between the screen and front door.

He called Moore and they opened the package together. In the envelope were two more envelopes. The last one contained a roll of black and white 35mm film. They went straight to Moore's darkroom to develop the roll. What they found was a series of pictures of an official-looking report which came to be known as the "Eisenhower Briefing Document." It described a group known as "MJ-12" which set policy with regards to UFOs and ETs. The rest is history.

Throughout 1998, I talked with Shandera almost monthly by phone, even though we both lived in the Los Angeles area at the time. Before the end of our conversations, Shandera said that he knew that aliens were here, the government knew about it, and had been involved in some sort of interaction with them for some time. Stunned by this, I asked him how he knew this to be true.

"I was shown something" he said.

He said that he could not tell me what it was, but that if I guessed right, he could affirm the fact. I wracked my brain, and those of my friends to figure this out. It was not a document, a picture, a film or video, a UFO in a hangar, or even a dead alien (all of which could be faked) and no, he hadn't shaken hands with one.

In 1998, Shandera began touring the lecture circuit, and even appeared on *Coast To Coast* with Art Bell, describing his theory that the Roswell wreckage held up in those famous pictures with Jesse Marcel was actually the real wreckage, and not a weather balloon/ radar reflector. He provided a timeline to prove his thesis. It seemed that he was finally coming out from behind the shadow of his partner, Bill Moore.

He agreed to an interview for my magazine before he went off to the east coast for a trip. That was in December of 1998. I never heard from him again, and his phone number was reassigned very quickly. When I called again in January, a woman's voice on an answering machine mispronounced his name and said that she didn't know who he was, or where he had gone. My new friend had just dropped off the face of the Earth. No one knew where he had gone, although rumors started to spread that he had been silenced in one way or another.

Bill Moore was just as mystified as anyone. "Maybe he just wanted to get out of the business" he said. I thought that was a weak explanation for the suddenness of Shandera's disappearance. It also seemed to hide something Moore might know.

So I prodded him further, and eventually, he relented with an anecdote:

> We were in a meeting with some CIA people and others. After it ended, we were standing around talking, and one of the agency guys looked at me and said "You're new here, but you [pointing at Shandera] we've known about for awhile." Obviously I couldn't wait to ask Jamie what was going on. He told me that he had done some work for the government during the Vietnam war, essentially providing expert testimony in a court-martial trial involving voice identification.

Shandera on *UFO Coverup?: Live!*

Moore continued with his opinion (I don't know if it was more than that) that Shandera had done more intelligence contract work since then, so perhaps it wasn't just chance that had brought them together. He emphasized that Shandera had always been open with him, and was an equal partner in their efforts to find and release official UFO documents.

The overall picture of Jamie Shandera that emerges is that we was not a government agent, but was briefed on just enough of the story to do his contracted job. Perhaps he didn't even know what sort of job he was doing, especially with his Roswell wreckage theory. He seemed to believe it, but it was the last anyone heard of him.

But why did he believe so strongly in the alien presence? He told me that he was "shown something." Since he wouldn't tell me what it was, I asked him where he had seen it. Shandera replied that he had been told to go to the crypt in the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. and to wait for a man who would talk to him. I was led to believe that he told of an artifact that was given to the government by the aliens.

On the *UFO Coverup?: Live!* special in 1988, two of the "Aviary" members (most likely Richard Doty and Robert Collins) appeared in silhouette with their voices electronically altered. Amongst declarations about the aliens' love for strawberry ice cream and Tibetan music, one mysterious AFOSI man told of a "book" that was given to us by the alien race. While an artist's conception flashed on the screen, he continued to describe the object as a sort of "crystal," which when gazed into, would show events of human and alien history. The "Yellow Book" as it was known in lore and rumor was supposed to telepathically interface with the user. (It may have also been called the "Red Book," or there were two of them.)

This object, if it exists, may be what Jamie Shandera was shown in 1998, and would certainly have changed his mind forever about an alien presence. Unfortunately, the Yellow Book may be one more piece of disinformation in a litany of junk that was released at the time, simply to ensnare unsuspecting Ufologists and the foreign intelligence agents who preyed on them.

If this (admittedly much more plausible) theory is correct, where does that leave us? Did he actually witness anything convincing (at least to him) or was he trying to get me to believe something for another purpose? I don't know if I'll ever find out, but I'd sure like to talk to him again.

The (UFO) Aviary
3/07/2008

In the early 1980s, Bill Moore and his research partner Jamie Shandera began conversations with government intelligence and counterintelligence personnel in order to force release of UFO-related information. There have been many accusations and misplaced suspicions about this period. Rumors have become "fact," and facts have been twisted by deeply-held beliefs into stories that bear little resemblance to what was actually happening.

Moore, for his part, agreed to watch and report on trends and beliefs in the UFO research community in order to keep officials updated on issues that related to possible leaks of information that had anything to do with secret and black budget-type technology and intelligence-gathering. He did other things too, such as keeping a watch on suspected foreign nationals posing as UFO researchers, and acting as a cut-out (a neutral party acting as a go-between) for passing messages between agencies and intelligence operatives.

Shandera has been virtually ignored by ufological history. He may have wanted it that way. As I wrote in my book *Project Beta*, it was later revealed to Moore that his partner was not a newbie in the world of intelligence operations. He may even have engaged in a little reporting on Moore. Shandera had been called in to provide expert testimony in a court-martial trial (possibly in relation to an intel operation) during the Vietnam conflict.

In return for their participation, they were shown and given various UFO documents, some (or maybe many) of which were either faked or dead-ends. There have been accusations of fakery on the part of Moore and Shandera, but these have not yet been proven.

As their network of government and former government contacts grew, the duo came up with a system to enable them to talk about the various personalities on the phone or in public, without having to refer to them by name. In spite of what you may have heard or read about what they decided to call "The Aviary," the group was never an officially sanctioned gang of spies, insiders and scientists. The members may have taken to their names with good humor and perhaps even enthusiasm, but no official imprimatur was ever used or assumed.

For reasons only known to them, Moore and Shandera decided to use the avian metaphor.

As far as I have been able to determine, these men were:

Dr. Hal Puthoff
Dale Graff
Dr. Kit Green
Col. John Alexander
Captain Robert Collins
Sgt. Richard Doty
Col. (?) Ernie Kellerstrauss

Not as certain:
Dr. Bruce Maccabee
C.B. Scott Jones

The man known as "Falcon" remains unidentified, although I have a pretty good idea who he was (he died in 2002.) [I subsequently learned from Moore that the man's name was Harry Rozitske, a man who had worked for the OSS in WWII and then for the CIA as an expert on the Soviet Union for decades. – G.B. 2015.] Presently, I am trying to determine if any of these men knew of his existence and the fact that he was the invisible puppeteer at the top of the disinfo game played with UFO researchers throughout the 1980s. Some of them undoubtedly did, but not all. Falcon preferred it that way. There have of course been accusations that Richard Doty was "Falcon," but this stems from his appearance on the *UFO Coverup?: Live!* show in 1989, as well as a statement to researcher Linda Howe.

Who Keeps The UFO Secrets?
8/20/2007

The Office of Naval Intelligence is the oldest intelligence unit in the US military. A man named Robert Walkowski is claiming that the Navy is the gatekeeper of the real black world UFO secrets. When I first bookmarked the site where this was posted about three weeks ago, there was a bit more

info on Naval involvement with the UFO subject. I have no idea why it was changed.

This info resembles the stories of a man calling himself “Mike Younger” who approached me in the mid-1990s, claiming to be working with special unit of Naval Intelligence. He told me that the Navy had much more authority over the status of the UFO subject than the Air Force. After all, he claimed, the Navy has jurisdiction over 70% of the planet (the oceans.) He told me about satellites that could locate anything, anywhere above and below the surface of the sea, all over the planet. This man also said that Naval Intelligence was in charge of security for Area 51, a claim that I have never been able to substantiate. At that time, Physicist Bob Lazar was talking about working for the Navy at the secret base.

This was all very heady stuff to a naïve ‘zine publisher like me. We talked in restaurants and cafes, where Younger bought along briefcases full of documents and pictures for me to look at, all the while saying that his special group was trying to get the real truth about UFOs out to the public. He talked the talk and seemed to back up his claims with little-known or even secret information, such as landing and takeoff schedules for the newly-announced Stealth fighter aircraft. This was confirmed by a close friend of mine, who went out to the Lockheed Skunk Works site before it was moved from the Burbank airport and actually saw the thing zoom over his head just when he was told it would. The burly Navy man also told us about developments in the Bosnian conflict weeks before they were reported in the news.

Early on, he handed me about 500 pages of his own writings on the subject of government secrets and UFOs. The thick booklets, printed on one side of each page, discussed the secret history of spycraft, UFOs, mind control, and even biowarfare. Apparently, these were given out to only a few people. Why he (or someone else) would go to all this trouble just to rile up a few UFO researchers remains a mostly inscrutable question.

Younger showed me the logo of the unit he claimed to be working for, which contained a saying in Latin that translated to: “Faithful Even After Death.” I suspect that there never was such a unit in existence.

[The logo was most likely created by Younger to impress his civilian contacts. It may also be a “Friday patch,” which military units create on their own as an unofficial logo that is traditionally worn on Fridays and on non-uniform apparel. The logo reads

NAVITNCOM/NAVSPECWAR–“Naval Intelligence Command/ Navy Special Warfare.” There is a SEAL Team 8 headquartered in Little Creek VA, and deployed in the Mediterranean and southern Europe. They may have an intelligence unit, according to internet sources. I do not know if this was the case in the 1990s, when this episode took place. – G.B. 2015.]

Ultimately, there was nothing provable about his UFO statements, but his method should be studied by anyone who is interested in the UFO/government angle: He told us about secret developments in the military world that later turned out to be true in order to get myself and others to listen to his UFO stories, which we really had no way of checking out. This is why I have often said that anything coming from a so-called “inside” source should not be taken as gospel until the facts can be checked. Unfortunately, many researchers are so charmed by this attention that they immediately regurgitate the UFO info, thereby infusing the public with many crazy stories that both muddy the waters of understanding and serve the insider’s agenda, which is of course ignored by the incautious researcher.

Because of this experience, and those of others (credulous and otherwise) I believe that many UFO “revelations” foisted on us in the last 50 years may have had very little to do with aliens and flying saucers. They were more likely cover stories to advance other agendas having nothing at all to do with UFOs, such as spycatching and diversionary tactics in service of counterintelligence operations. The UFO stories tend to be the wackiest of the wacky, such as those told to Paul Bennewitz in the 1980s, and which spread throughout Ufology for years afterwards.

But as for Mike, I was told years later that he died of a heart attack at age 30 while waiting for a bus, and that there was compelling evidence that he was never in the armed forces. This was in the form of letters between himself and someone who apparently really was in Naval Intelligence and a

SEAL organization. So it appears that I was being used by someone else higher up the food chain that was being used as well.

Some people will never be divested of the notion that the term "military intelligence" is a oxymoron, but there are definitely a lot of sharp people who choose that career path.

Caveat Emptor.

David Lynch, *Twin Peaks*, and UFOs
(and the Government)
9/17/2007

In light of the imminent release of the new DVD box set of David Lynch's seminal TV series, *Twin Peaks*, this story was uncovered by my friend Miles Lewis at his Anomaly TV site:

> During the course of events I must not divulge, I recently came into contact with a man whose government entity I cannot divulge either. Now, however, this same man is a mutual acquaintance of the famous motion picture director David Lynch. In fact, I can probably goes as far as saying that they are friends to a certain extent. I cannot verify his entire story, but, at the same time, I have no reason to doubt him. But he said that the character on the early 90's television series, *Twin Peaks*, the main character, Agent Dale Cooper, was in fact based on him, that David Lynch more or less used him as a source, an inspiration for the basis of the FBI agent. In fact, from here on out, I will just refer to this man as "Agent Cooper" to simplify things. Apparently, "Agent Cooper" and David Lynch were boyhood friends. However, sometime during the late 60's/early 70's they lost contact with one another and did not meet again until a chance encounter in the mid 80's. From what I understand, this chance encounter was partly the inspiration for the development of the Twin Peaks series. Now, the show's primary purpose was still an artistic endeavor on Lynch's part to create an entertaining television series. However, from what I understand, under this "Agent Cooper's" urging, Lynch infused certain codes and secret messages pertaining to different things he had learned

> from “Agent Cooper”– and they are scattered all throughout series. At one point in the series, Project Blue Book is referenced. And I am sure, as most of you know, that Project Blue Book is popularly believed to be the military’s investigation into the thousands of UFO reports during the 50’s and 60’s. However, this was only the government’s cover story. The true purpose of Project Blue Book was to test the general public’s perception and reaction to UFO reports and sightings, and to use the data gleaned from this study as a means to maximize the effectiveness of using such UFO stories to manipulate the population.

I haven’t yet asked Miles where he received this information, or who this person actually is, or if he even actually exists. Who knows what someone would want to do with people like us who are interested in these issues, but it’s an interesting story with themes that have been tackled more than once in my writings here. I would urge readers not to take these “revelations” literally, but use them as food for thought.

On re-watching *Twin Peaks* a couple of months ago, I was struck with a sense of high-strangeness when the Air Force officer character began speaking about his involvement with Blue Book, and the later revelation that the hero’s nemesis was actually driven insane and possessed by a dark force from the woods after going there to investigate a UFO sightings flap. It seemed unnervingly sneaky of Lynch and his co-writer Mark Frost to introduce this theme that seemed so peripheral to the main story, but this is exactly how intelligence types (and spiritual avatars, and good artists, actually) impart important ideas to their audience. Things which appear to be incidental to the subject at hand, are in actuality keys to greater understanding (or madness, if you are so inclined.) True learning is never spoon-fed.

Actually, this methodical madness can be one of the hallmarks of many UFO encounters as well. The subject always presents us with disjointed questions, never any answers. Part of the answers, if there are any, may lie in how we phrase the questions we ask ourselves.

Movie Spies Vs. Real Spies
11/12/2007

A couple of weeks ago, I re-watched *Confessions Of A Dangerous Mind*, the George Clooney-directed semi-biopic on Chuck Barris. It was very good even on second viewing. What it brings to mind is the gap between intelligence agents that we see depicted on screen and real ones, whom I have met and spoken with on a few occasions.

While a movie or TV show cannot really give an audience the feeling of what it is like to deal with these people, I have found that recent efforts (Martin Sheen's character in Showtime's *Roswell* comes to mind, as well as the soft-focus paranoia of the main character in the short-lived series *Nowhere Man*) have come closer to the mark. The *X-Files'* Mulder and Scully were law enforcement agents, not spies, and this may have had a lot to do with my disinterest in the show. This past weekend, someone asked me what these people are like. The best description of a good spy is that he or she is equal parts psychologist, magician, and robot.

In order to get people to do what you want them to, the agent needs to flatter the target's personal prejudices and in many cases, feed their paranoia. In the case of UFO "leaks," the general researcher profile is well-known. All that needs to be done is to feed information about a previously unknown event, or sensational revelations about an old case to the target, who gleefully spreads the story around the grapevine. In recent years, many researchers have become savvy to this method of deception, and most are now more careful before making announcements. This may have caused the disinfo mill to abandon the lone UFO researcher in favor of anonymous postings on various internet sites and blogs.

The field agent is still useful though in determining how well the stories have spread and more importantly, to keep in touch with those in whom various agencies are interested, well as (and perhaps more importantly) who *they* are talking to.

An agent also needs to be able to distract the target's attention while other mission objectives are being pursued. One hand is showing you a blacked-out document while the other is rifling your briefcase. All the time, the agent needs to convince the person of interest that they are the only one who matters in the events at hand, even if they ultimately are all staged for his/ her benefit.

Some of the intel agents and others I have met who are involved in areas of national (and corporate) security are surprisingly emotionless, or

appear to be that way in my presence. This may of course be part of a warrior mindset, which is required in international espionage, but anyone seen as an enemy (and some assets as well) are no more than pawns to be manipulated in pursuit of a mission goal. Bill Moore mentioned to me that the intelligence puppetmaster known as "Falcon" would not talk about anything except the next step in the project at hand. Questions about his family or well-being were met with a stare or a quick change of subject.

One government scientist I met was deeply religious, although not fundamentalist, and would talk about comparative religion for hours if the listener was receptive. He would clam up on questions about his involvement with certain projects. He did sincerely want to help with my research though, and I found that he would answer some questions hours or days later in what can best be described as a non-linear fashion, although I had to pay very close attention to understand that this was what he was doing.

There may be a book or film that depicts the feeling of interaction with intelligence agents in the way that I have experienced it, but I am not aware of any examples. This is of course due to individual reactions and psychology. The best that art or literature can do is attempt to communicate the indescribable, and the strange sense of excitement and fear that these people engender in the those who aren't "in the club" can be quite seductive. Perhaps the best way to describe it is a psychological "carnival ride."

If you ever have any dealings with these people (knowingly at any rate), stow your ego, keep your emotions in check, and don't believe everything you hear, but remember all that is said. [Who knows what sort of scenarios exist with suspected terrorist organizations and drug traffickers, etc. at this point in time, but humans are pretty much the same as they have been throughout history.

– G.B. 2015]

The Culture of Lies
5/21/2009

Two weeks ago, while camping on the central coast of California, I met a married couple who appeared to be in their late 50s. Both had worked for

the U.S. Government in different capacities. While we sat around the campfire, I listened to what this couple had to say about their many years in government service.

The husband talked about his work at a lab in the 1970s. He told an amusing story about a janitor who cleaned up a radioactive spill with a mop and bucket. His wife would only say that she had recently retired after a lifetime as a "bureaucrat," but would not elaborate. She said very little, but the quote I remember most was "If you tell the truth, you're out."

What she offered in explanation was that everyone from the President down to the lowliest brass doorknob-polisher in the Pentagon are never inclined to be truthful about anything having to do with their jobs. If they dare to do so, they could be fired, laid off, passed over for promotions, ostracized, etc. Of course, most people would say that this should be obvious. From her careful choice of words I inferred that the lying is deep, rampant and probably dangerous, and considered almost nonchalantly as a hazard of the territory.

Many people get by quite well never telling the whole truth in the course of their work, but those in the private sector do not have the same onus on them to be truthful, since they are not paid by the public. The culture of lying in the Government has unfortunately been raised to a rare art. It may be said that these lies actually grease the wheels of government, providing a means by which the greater good may often be served by silencing the squeaks of bureaucracy and red tape.

When an issue of public policy is at stake or lying covers up crimes it becomes intolerable. This is also obvious to most people.

What those interested in government secrecy on the UFO subject sometimes forget is that they are asking questions of people who are used to withholding information and are so good at it that they may often believe their own falsehoods. What is worse is that the information is probably compromised even before it gets to the secretary, PR person or military officer whom the researcher has contacted. Many of the "holy grail"-type documents retrieved through FOIA may be subject to this culture of lying as well.

I have noticed that retired (and sometimes active) military or intelligence people will answer questions indirectly, but you have to be paying attention, and remember all of your questions. Sometimes they'll answer days, weeks, or months later. Some of these people are very sharp.

The upshot is that researchers need to develop their search and interview skills to surf the treacherous waters of the government culture of lying. Patience, good note-taking and a willingness to play the game by their rules is essential. Even then, success is not guaranteed, but when a story starts to fall together, it makes the game worth it.

SERPO Was A Big Fat Fake
2/22/2007

I have maintained for over a year now (along with a few other researchers) that the SERPO story which surfaced in late 2005 and continued well into in 2006 was very likely a disinformation operation designed to ensnare unsuspecting UFO researchers and all those interested in UFO information in order to track connections and interests. This is remarkably similar to the events which surrounded Paul Bennewitz and the UFO community in the 1980s. The fact is less remarkable when we consider that some of the same people came out of retirement to lend support to the project.

SERPO was supposedly a planet orbiting in the Zeta-Reticuli star system where in 1965, 10 American men and 2 women in the military were sent in an exchange program for one alien who stayed on Earth. They were supposed to stay for ten years, but ended up returning 13 years later. The account posted on the SERPO site reads very much like certain documents and confidential letters that were sent to Bennewitz from 1980 to ‘87. On December 6th of 2005, some of the original players from that era appeared on the *Coast To Coast* show with George Noory, along with Whitley Strieber and SERPO webmaster Bill Ryan.

I figured from what I was able to gather in private conversations and from open sources that the whole campaign was designed to cover up a super-secret military project, perhaps involving Unmanned Aerial Vehilces (UAVs.) Victor Martinez, a substitute teacher in the Los Angeles area, was chosen as the public face of the SERPO story, and began by sending emails to selected members of the Ufological research community in the fall of 2004. The intrigue was built slowly, perhaps as a way to gauge the reaction, and to figure out who was interested, so as to cater to their prejudices. Martinez was emailed various statements by someone who referred to

himself as “Request Anonymous,” and expected to forward them to UFO researchers, as well as post them on the SERPO website. Since Martinez’ background is apparently in writing and editing, he began to change the wording and grammar of the releases. He was reportedly told at one point to stop doing this, or he would be dropped for another contact. Apparently he couldn’t help himself, as Bill Ryan, a previously unknown personality was picked out of the blue to take over for Martinez. Ryan did as he was told and remains the point man on the now mostly dead issue. (He has continued with another site called “Project Camelot.”)

Why should “Request Anonymous” care about spelling and grammar errors? Shouldn’t he have been grateful to Martinez for his services in getting the truth out to the public? This would make sense if SERPO was really an attempt to get a secret UFO story out. A quick look at the SERPO site should immediately raise questions. “Request Anonymous” writes:

> The 12 remained until 1978, when they were returned to the same location in Nevada. Seven men and one woman returned. Two died on the alien’s home planet. Four others decided to remain, according to the returnees. Of the eight that returned, all have died. The last survivor died in 2002.

The math is wrong. How could eight people return to Earth out of twelve when two died on the planet and four decided to remain? My contention is that this was a deliberate mistake designed as a calling card or message that would be recognized as such by those who were supposed to know where to look for more information elsewhere in the text. Martinez was dropped because he was garbling the message. Meanwhile, UFO fans and radio hosts were busy deciphering their own meanings from the latest craze that flattered their prejudices and helped to spread the SERPO meme in cyberspace, on the airwaves, and in UFO publications. “Mistakes” like these sometimes hide in plain sight, but many UFO investigators are too busy looking at the finger to realize where it’s pointing. The disinformers used a story that had been circulating for at least 20 years and built on it to lend credence to the campaign.

A group of researchers calling themselves the “TC Group” have been researching the story for awhile now, and appear to be closing in on some aspect of the truth. From the *UFO Digest* site:

> According to the Open Minds Research Team web site administrator and a report directly from their confidential sources posted this week, previous information provided to them about Project SERPO was false - at least partially false:
>
> New information given to the Open Minds Research Team from their sources, known has the TC Group, was partially related to a method used by government authorities to track leaks, identify leakers and monitor the way such information is disseminated over the Internet, according to the site administrator. Starting in March 2006, the Open Minds Research Team had reported on their Web site that the TC Group had contacted them. This group allegedly had inside knowledge about the Project SERPO story and been trying to follow up on the authenticity of various aspects of it.
>
> From what were believed to be reliable sources providing information to the TC Group, the Open Minds Research Team received and posted information from this group that claimed Project SERPO was, in part, a false cover story.

Sources told the TC Group that the Project SERPO story was released within the military and intelligence communities to protect other real information about related activities within those communities.

This is almost exactly what happened in the Bennewitz scenario and later disinfo released in connection with the project. Certain information on underground bases, alien exchanges, and alien "weapons" were confidentially leaked to certain researchers like John Lear and William Cooper. The leaks were monitored to see who got the info passed on to them first, and what they did with it. Since a lot of the information dealt with secret defense projects, when the same rumors began to circulate amongst unfriendly agents, the AFOSI and others could track who was talking to whom.

In the case of SERPO, some of the most vocal members of the UFO community have swallowed it again.

The preceding SERPO article turned out to be one of the most controversial that I ever wrote. The reactions were very polarized. Either

people loved it and wanted to know more, or they felt moved to tell me, in the most minute detail, why I was wrong. Richard Doty emailed me a message that indicated that I was way off the mark and stopped all contact with me afterwards. In spite of this, I stand by what I wrote to this day.

SERPO Post Generates Debate
2/25/2007

From the minute my SERPO post was put up, there was reaction. I thought it was a dead issue and most people had moved on to other things. This is why I felt it was safe to reveal my opinions. There were about 60 emails in one of my inboxes within 24 hours, most of which were nearly indecipherable to me, and dealt with obscure minutiae which interests no one but the most hardcore.

I have no concrete idea why persons unknown felt moved to perpetrate the SERPO story. My story was an attempt to hypothesize about various aspects of the drama that swirled around in early 2006. I felt that I could not talk about it at the time, because I didn't think I had the full picture (I still don't) and some of the people who I thought were involved preferred to stay in the background and let things play out. In a weird way, I wanted to stand back as well and let the scenario take its course instead of pointing fingers, which would have changed the outcome, even if only slightly. It seems that there was an underground of researchers looking into the story even before it broke on the wider scene.

Some of those who are interested in the SERPO drama in various ways have expressed dismay and unhappiness with my post. I will reiterate here that these are my own opinions, theories, and guesses, put together with the facts, rumors, and accounts I have been able to gather over the past year. It is by no means the "Truth," but my version of the story. I have found that SERPO really is a horrible "tarbaby" which I would prefer to keep at arm's length. It's one of those things in the UFO world that can ruin your love for the subject.

If I have misrepresented anyone, I apologize, but my opinions on SERPO will remain as they are until someone offers a more complete picture of what really went on and why–in 500 words or less.

Plasma Ball UFOs Over New Mexico
5/17/2007

According to a report at Wired.com, crossing high-energy laser beams in the atmosphere heats up the air to create the fourth state of matter known as a "plasma." To the observer, this appears as a glowing ball of light. 99% of the visible matter in the universe (mostly stars of course) is in a plasma state. What do you want to bet that this is one of the phenomena that Paul Bennewitz observed over Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque in the late 1970s and 1980s?

An old research paper[2] describes experiments with plasma-producing lasers at the Air Force Weapons Lab (AFWL) at Kirtland in the late 1960s. By the mid-1980s, the art of high-energy laser tech was further refined to the point where one witness saw and told me about 1-2 foot holes burned through foot-thick reinforced concrete walls in a facility at Kirtland.

Another project called "Shiva Star," also based at Kirtland, continued research into laser weapons designed to shoot down missiles with bursts of high-energy laser light:

> In the early 1990s, the US Air Force was preparing tests at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, designed to lead to a ground-based plasma-weapon in the late 1990s capable of firing plasma bullets at incoming ballistic missile warheads. The enabling technology was a 'fast capacitor bank' called Shiva Star that could store 10 million joules of energy and release it instantaneously. Officials anticipated firing bullets at 3,000km/sec in 1995 and 10,000km/sec- 3% of the speed of light - by the turn of the century. The tests absorbed little more than a few million dollars of annual funding (*Jane's Defence Weekly* July 29, 1998).

According to sources for my book *Project Beta*, this was not a new idea, even in the 1990s, and had in fact been going on for years. No surprise there. This was only one of the hundreds of experiments that were carried out by the AFWL and Sandia Labs on the premises of Kirtland in the 1970s and '80s. It's no wonder that they would risk one man's sanity and a host of counterintelligence operations and disinformation in order to keep these projects secret.

For more info on directed energy weapons, see the Air Force Research Lab's list of projects and descriptions.[3]

[2] http://journals.aps.org/prl/abstract/10.1103/PhysRevLett.19.10
[3] http://www.kirtland.af.mil/afrl_de/

Uncle Sam and UFOs
6/14/2007

An article by Gus Russo provides a good overview of and introduction to the current state of saucers and spies. Russo chronicles the history of failed UFO disclosure, beginning with Disney animator Ward Kimball in 1956, and continuing through the Robert Emenegger and Linda Howe stories of promised UFO footage which never materialized.

He conducted an email interview with me, and stated that he was hired to write the article by one Dan Smith, who enjoys no small amount of notoriety in the UFO research community for his strange stories passed along by "UFO insiders." Russo readily admits this in the article, which vouches somewhat for his impartiality.

One fact he brings to light particularly interested me: A conference from May 20-25 of 1985 in McClean, VA, which was called "The Advanced Theoretical Physics Conference," a title which concealed the actual agenda, which appears to have been a meeting of current and former government intelligence personnel to find out what the government knew about UFOs– in other words, a high-level UFO conference. Apparently nothing was concluded, but lowly citizens like us might never know if anything positive transpired in any case.

In 1999, I published an article in my old magazine (*The Excluded Middle*) entitled "PSI + mc^2, + R&D = MJ12: UFOs, Physics, Parapsychology Mix In Secret Group," describing something that was known at the time as "The Advanced Theoretical Physics Working Group." The article examined evidence (from the research of Melinda Leslie and Randy Koppang) that the group had continued on to look for answers to the UFO question in the minds and files of the U.S. government, and was composed of people who supposedly had high-level access to the information.

At the time, the only names on record were people like John Alexander, Ed Dames, Hal Puthoff, Bob Wood, and Jack Houck–all former employees of the government (or government contractors) and all certainly interested in the UFO question. Russo brings up more names (although disguised in aliases but which students of the subject can readily guess at.)

Russo concludes and generally agrees with my own opinion:

> …there is certainly a very small percentage government officials with intelligence clearance–some active, some retired–who are interested in the UFO research community, if not UFOs themselves. Some of these men are of the impression, rightly or wrongly, that a very few individuals in government and the private sector are keeping the big secret even from them. This is small consolation to earnest UFO researchers, but at least they should no longer feel alone and marginalized as kooks completely at odds with officialdom.[4]

Definitely worth checking out, even if there are a couple of minor factual errors that I spied in the text–which is a hazard I have found when writing and reading about this subject.

[4]https://web.archive.org/web/20080221220919/http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/29317

Underground Bases
6/04/2007

The alien underground base meme has infected the UFO community since the mid-1980s. Paul Bennewitz (a name you should know by now) wrote hundreds of letters to researchers and government officials about this issue and is generally regarded as the first to mention the subject.

After Bennewitz got out of the UFO biz, others like John Lear and Bill Cooper took up the cudgels and beat late night radio listeners over the head with more stories about deals with the U.S. government involving alien technology in return for abduction rights.

Although the rumors were based on a disinfo operation (as revealed by William Moore in 1989) this sort of craziness dominated a large segment of the field throughout the 1990s, until people just got tired of it.

But you learn something new every day. On a recent trip to New Mexico, I talked to a person I trust and learned that there may have in fact been an underground facility near the Dulce area. Next thing you know, I'll be ranting about an alien invasion and shady deals with ETs.

The Jicarilla Apache reservation and the Archuleta Mesa in northwestern New Mexico was made famous in the 1980s and '90s as the location of a number of strange events, including sightings of UFOs and cattle mutilations. Looks like I'll have to make another jaunt out to the area and try to see for myself. This may be a little difficult, since the Tribal Council has refused to let any more outsiders into the backcountry.

In light of this, Bennewitz may have been right about the tunnels, but not about their purpose. Remember, one of the models I use is to play with ideas without becoming dogmatically attached to them. On rare occasions, this method bears fruit. If not, at least it's interesting.

A good book by Richard Sauder, entitled *Underground Bases and Tunnels* examines the reality behind digging and tunnel-boring technology, with some eye-opening facts that the author found in numerous open-source journals and books.

Why is this underground base stuff so important? If you're one of those people who are interested in mysteries and secrets, that's reason enough. Moving into deeper and darker territory, it is a fact that underground facilities are great places to hide things from your enemies ***and*** your friends.

Cheyenne Mountain (underneath which NORAD and the Air Force has maintained facilities since 1966) is something we all know about because its main objective is the passive air defense of the United States. Facilities where research and development of defensive (and possibly offensive) weapons take place are understandably more secret.

In the early 1980s, for example, research into "star wars"-type defense was reportedly taking place somewhere underneath the Nevada Test Site. The tests required a small nuclear detonation to begin a chain reaction and fire multiple X-ray-type lasers. The research scientist in charge of the project was Dr. Edward Teller (cynically referred to by some as "Dr.

Strangelove" since the character in the Kubrick film was apparently based on him.)

In the early 1980s, the Department of Defense and other alphabet soup agencies discovered that credulous UFO researchers made perfect disinfo targets to keep cold war enemy spies in check and off balance. As the usefulness of some people (like Paul Bennewitz) began to wane, and others (John Lear, Bill Cooper) took up the cause of revealing the "alien threat," their "insider" contacts began to tell them about a project to create a bomb that could penetrate a few hundred feet of solid ground. The reason for this, they whispered, was to destroy the alien base underneath the Archuleta Mesa near Dulce, New Mexico. They told UFO researchers that the project was called "Excalibur."

Coincidentally, Teller's project was also code-named "Excalibur." The reason for revealing the secret name of the project was that U.S. intelligence knew that Soviet spies had heard about it–they just weren't quite sure yet what it was. If the name was leaked to UFO researchers, they could see who came calling on these individuals for more information. Some of them were not wide-eyed UFO buffs, and intelligence community wanted to know who they were.

As for the underground base in northern New Mexico, no one has ever proved that it exists. However, in light of recent revelations from a credible researcher who claims to have personally seen incriminating evidence that there may have indeed been something there, I might have to open my mind a bit to this possibility. The facility may have had something to do with the numerous animal mutilations and strange lights that appeared in the area in the 1970s and '80s. The strangeness that was assigned to an evil alien race may have been much closer to home, with organizations that would much rather that the public laughed at stories of UFOs.

Was He Killed For Talking About Alien Bases?
9/23/2007

In my book *Project Beta*, I briefly mentioned the story of a government contract employee who claimed to have worked at the supposed underground base near Dulce, NM. This man, Philip Schneider, toured the country in the early 1990s giving lectures about his experiences at the base

and what he called a "firefight with alien humanoids" there sometime in 1979.

It is curious that he chose to speak out on these experiences just as researchers were beginning to doubt that there ever was an "underground alien facility" in the area, as claimed by Paul Bennewitz (based on direct disinfo fed to him in the early 1980s.)

In January of 1996, Schneider was found dead in his apartment in Wilsonville, Oregon. His ex-wife claims that she was not allowed to see the body, and that there was evidence that he was strangled with surgical tubing. She claims that the Oregon authorities did not perform a proper autopsy to definitively determine the cause of death. About a year after *Project Beta* was published, I was shown a letter from Cynthia Schneider Drayer asking the New Mexico authorities to look into his death. This would have been difficult, as they had no jurisdiction over a crime supposedly committed in Oregon.

Schneider had cancer, osteoporosis, and other health problems at the time of his death, which makes the suicide angle a bit more believable, but his lecturing zeal somewhat contradicts this scenario. If, as I currently believe, there was never an underground UFO base at Dulce, what are we to make of this story?

In the early 1990s, Robert Lazar claimed that he worked on UFO-technology at Area 51, but he has never been "silenced." This is probably because he was doing exactly what someone wanted him to do, whether he was aware of it or not. Schneider was not only lecturing about aliens and UFOs, but a vast network of underground bases, and the associated New World Order-type stories that get paranoids riled up–true, partially true, or not.

What better way to excite the audience for this sort of storytelling than to have the perpetrator killed to "silence" him? It seems that the best course of action with someone like Philip Schneider would be to leave him alone and let him preach to the choir. Causing his death would only serve to give his accounts more publicity and validity.

If there is (or was) an actual underground base there in the northwest corner of New Mexico Schneider may have been lecturing from a script that even he did not know he was reading. Like Lazar, perhaps he did see underground facilities, and strange things may have happened to him. Also like Lazar, he may have been exposed to things specifically so that he

would go and talk about them. His lectures were filled with so much strange information that he was guaranteed to be marginalized.

On the other hand, if his stories had a bit of truth, they are so unbelievable that they provide their own sort of security.

Alien Shot At Area 51!
6/14/2007

Echoing the old stories of an alien shootout in an underground base near Dulce, NM, here's a new one, courtesy of our friends in the intelligence community. Why anyone would believe this story (basically an elaboration of stories told to Paul Bennewitz/Bill Cooper/John Lear, etc. in the mid-1980s) is truly amazing. The incident supposedly took place in 1983.

This snippet was sent out to UFO researchers and other interested parties on May 6th:

> As the jeep approached Gate 3, the OSI [AFOSI] agent noticed the guard was missing from the required location outside the gate house. As the jeep stopped, the OSI Agent got out of the jeep to investigate.
>
> The OSI agent walked up to the gate to check on the guard. As the OSI agent got closer to the front door of the gate, the OSI agent noticed the interior of the gate was blood splattered. The OSI agent noticed only small pieces of human body parts were left of a human being. The OSI agent returned to the jeep and contacted the Central Security Control (main/primary security office for the complex) and reported the findings. The Director of Security contacted his office by way of a radio phone, mounted inside the jeep. The OSI agent, armed with only an automatic pistol, walked around the area searching for a perpetrator.
>
> The OSI agent located the "Visitor," lying down near an underground water culvert. The OSI agent challenged the Visitor, ordering the Visitor to give up. The Visitor walked away, followed by the OSI agent. At some point, the OSI agent fired his weapon at the Visitor, as a warning. The Visitor, turned and pointed something at the OSI.

> The OSI agent fired directly at the Visitor, hitting the Visitor directly in the chest with two rounds from the 45 caliber automatic pistol. The Visitor fell to the ground. It took about 18 minutes for additional security forces to arrive. The Visitor was placed inside a containment chamber and transported back to the S-2 facility. The Visitor recovered from the wounds.

Jacques Vallée famously said "Just because a message comes from heaven, doesn't mean it's not stupid." Although he was referring to quotes from "space brothers," the concept is valid, "heaven" in this case being government "insiders."

What if the story has a grain of truth? What is that grain? Since there is no way for us civilians to see the complete picture, it remains elusive. The "truth" as such may be lie with who stands to gain from the information. It may simply be ego on the part of the person who leaked this info, or someone may be stirring the pot to see who comes sniffing around for keywords like "Security Gate 3," "S-2 ″ and "OSI."

I apologize if I sound too suspicious or bitter, but when have any of these "disclosures" led to anything substantial to advance the study of the UFO subject? Intelligence personnel are interested in national security first (as they should be.) UFO "truth" is way down the list.

Next Generation Stealth Technology As UFOs
12/7/2007

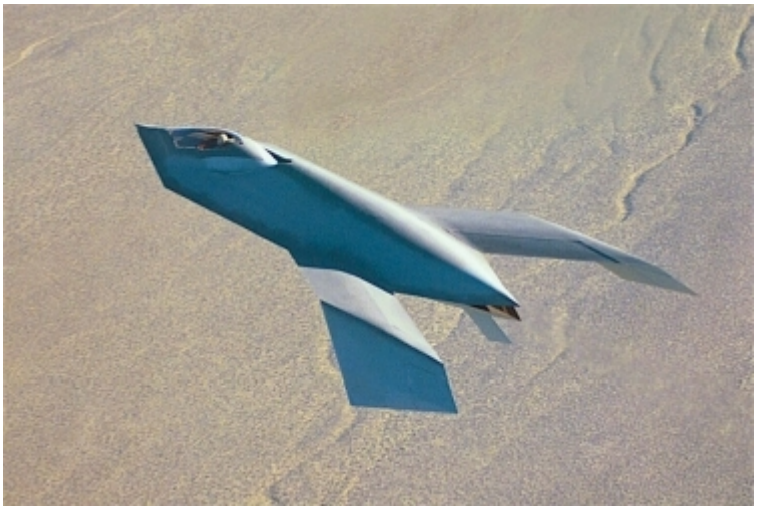
Every year, there seems to be less wiggle room for sightings of unidentified flying objects that are truly unidentifiable, because humans keep coming up with more new and amazing stuff. Recently, I started looking up information on aircraft stealth technology and Organic Light-Emitting Diodes (OLEDs.)

OLEDs are a new type of LED displays that are actually printed on a thin, flexible polymer medium. This type of display is already used in some cel phones and rumored to be coming on the new ipod nano. Sony has just released an 11-inch OLED video monitor that is 3 millimeters thick.

There seems to be no reason why this material could not have been adapted to use for visual stealth applications. By "visual stealth," I am

implying the forbidden-as-wacko-if-you-mention-it word "invisibility." There have of course been reports on "active camouflage" for ground troops using OLED-printed fabrics, but it would seem easier to apply this technology to airframes.

A *Jane's Defence Weekly* article published in 2002 describes the development of the McDonnell-Douglas (later Boeing) project dubbed the "Bird Of Prey," which was built by Douglas and tested at "Area 51 ″ from 1992 to 1999. Its first actual flight was in 1996. This very strange-looking craft was designed as a prototype to test radar, acoustic, and visual stealth theories. Significantly, Boeing officials admitted that the craft's overall goal was "to achieve daylight stealth." The unnamed *Jane's* writer also adds that "The shape of the aircraft, too, is–accidentally or intentionally–laid out to avoid shadows." I don't know if that means shadows on the ground, or shadows on the craft itself.



In the early 1980s, Air Force Intelligence and security personnel told ill-fated UFO researcher Paul Bennewitz about an aircraft which rendered itself virtually invisible by projecting whatever was behind it (from the observer's viewpoint) onto the skin of the aircraft itself. What was described bears a close resemblance to OLED technology. While this may have been disinfo designed to bring spies out of the woodwork, the resemblance may be too close to ignore.

Coupled with the fact that much defense tech is about 10-20 years ahead of where much of the public thinks it is, we can see that one of the very first applications of ultra-thin polymers coated with a bright, light

emitting substance would have found its home in the world of black projects.

This of course does not explain UFOs that make very non-aircraft-like maneuvers.

A UFO That Acted Like A Rocket
9/19/07

In his 1960s-era books, John Keel recounted reports of unusual flying things that looked like private airplanes. I came across a report from last year of a UFO that looked like a rocket launch.

I subscribe to a mailing list called "Launch Alert," which sends out bulletins when there are scheduled rocket and missile launches from Vandenberg Air Force Base, which is about 3 hours from where I live. Yesterday, I watched the Worldview 1 imaging satellite rise into space south across the Pacific Ocean, on its way into a polar orbit.

Looking around on Space Archive, the home site of Launch Alert, I discovered a little section called "unusual sightings." The most interesting one (reported on May 9th of 2006) describes an apparent conventional rocket which did something very unconventional:

> I saw the launch this morning from about 650 miles west and 41,000 [feet] up. A great place to see a launch. I was wondering what kind of launch vehicle it was. It seemed to travel mostly in a westward arc but after what appeared to be a couple of stage separations a forward moving puff of smoke appeared and then the object seemed to go straight up from that point continuing as a point of light going up vertically until we lost sight of it.

There were no scheduled or observed launches from Vandenberg that day. The witness was in a jet flying over the Eastern Pacific Ocean off the California coast.

The object was either something quite unexplainable, or a possibly space vehicle belonging to our military that has some very unusual launch characteristics. The fact that the witness saw it from an airliner (along with others on separate flights) makes it unusual that air traffic was not alerted. I

believe that there is a temporary no-flight restriction in the airspace around Vandenberg during launches.

2- I Was There! I Swear!: First Person Stuff

Although I am usually loath to include myself in the things I write about, occasionally something affects me so deeply or is so noteworthy that it needs to be covered. First up is a piece written exclusively for this volume detailing my period of extreme paranoia. This is followed by the most personal of first-person stories, a weird dream (illustrated above) which features my friend, researcher and author Nick Redfern, who was also the other half of UFOmystic for most of its run. I have seen one or two truly unexplained flying objects, and the clearest one happened while I was writing for the blog. These and a few other adventures were hand-picked just for you.

Crazy Talk
10/12/2015

Writer/philosopher Robert Anton Wilson often referred to a concept called "Chapel Perilous." The term has a history stretching back to the Middle Ages and Thomas Mallory's *Morte d'Arthur*, where a sorceress unsuccessfully attempts to seduce Sir Lancelot. Wilson used it as a metaphor for anyone who goes through a particular period of fear and self-doubt and comes through as either a raving paranoid or a complete agnostic.

For a period in the mid-1990s, I thought that my mail was being tampered with, my phone was tapped, and even my landlord was in on the scheme. Some of this turned out to be true, but paranoia was brewing for a few years before it sprung fully-grown from my head.

We were publishing strange stories in the *Excluded Middle* magazine. Many of them dealt with government issues. I wrote about an adventure in New Mexico where I was chased away from a supposed UFO crash site by white vans, and one page in the same issue was a form we provided for people to request an FOIA search on themselves. My friend Richard Sarradet also wrote a series of articles about secret military projects.

Unknown to me at the time, these articles were inspired and partially dictated by a group which claimed to be from Naval Intelligence. They contacted Richard and started feeding him mountains of information on what was going on at Area 51, inter-service rivalry, and UFO information. In short order, they asked for a meeting with me as well. (See "Who Keeps The UFO Secrets?" in Chapter 1 for more on this.) My contact, who called himself "Mike Younger," showed me pictures of UFOs apparently flying over some desert facility, CIA documents on mind control, and federal budgets showing line items for obscure projects that were sucking millions of dollars into a black hole.

I asked why he wanted to talk to me and he said that he had "looked at my file." This both shocked and flattered me that I was important enough to deserve scrutiny. It didn't matter at the time if it was true or not; I believed it. This was step one in getting my attention. Next was getting me to rely on his information and counsel as my source on secret government projects. He eventually told me that it was very easy to watch me if someone wanted to. This was probably the clincher, since it meant that I was emotionally tied to him as a lifeline to ask about suspicious things that I was starting to notice.

I am certain that the noises coming from my bookshelf in the middle of the night were not caused by government agents.

That needs an explanation.

For many years, I worked a graveyard shift for three days a week and worked on my writing and magazine editing at night the other four. Between 2 and 4 AM, an insistent scratching noise would occasionally come from the part of my office bookshelf that held my kachina doll collection. There were no insects or mice or rats in the house, and the bookshelf was against the wall, so there was no place for anything to hide. The noise was more like someone using a fingernail to tweak a small sliver of wood or bamboo and it would stop if I made a move to investigate. It went on one night while I was involved in a marathon four-hour phone call with Mike, so it didn't depend on sounds to stop it, but any attempt to approach or investigate shut it down. It was strange, but not frightening. The noise always seemed to come from somewhere in the middle of the group of dolls. I moved the dolls off the shelf and the noise stopped, but when I put them back, it started up again. The dolls had no evidence of tampering or damage. I still have them. The noise always came from the same place on the same shelf and went on for a year or so. I can't remember if the cessation or indeed the start coincided with any event or change in my life.

Other things I was told started to bother me. Mike said that someone sitting outside or in another building could see what was on my computer screen by scanning the signal of the CRT. Early one night I was alone in the place and doing normal house things. After awhile, I noticed that someone in the landlord's apartment (which was directly above mine and had the same floor plan) was walking around too. To my growing apprehension, I realized that no matter where I went in the place, the noises and footsteps from above echoed mine. I heard whoever it was in every room I entered, and in the hallway as I moved about. This went on for a few minutes, and continued as I ran around trying to escape what I tried to tell myself was coincidence, but became less easy to assign as such. Finally, I went in my office and typed in large letters on my computer screen "I KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING. STOP IT NOW." It stopped. I was too scared to ever ask my landlord about it. This could have been simple coincidence, and if I wasn't in such a heightened state of paranoia to begin with, I might not have noticed.

I took to turning off my monitor and disconnecting my internet cable when I was not in my office, even for a few minutes.

One day I noticed a man in a car sitting across the street in line with my living room, looking at my place. When I went to the window to see what he was doing, he raised a camera and apparently took a picture, then drove away. He may have been taking photos for a real estate company. I told myself that to calm down.

For months, I received 10 or more phone calls a day, but when I picked up, there was no one on the line, or at least they didn't say anything. Sometimes I heard a clicking or soft humming. I was scared that the sounds were designed to control my thoughts in some way and always hung up quickly. If I didn't pick up, the phone would ring 20 or 30 times before whoever or whatever it was gave up. I finally got an answering machine and the maddening calls eventually ended. No one ever left a message.

To protect my home address, I signed up for a P.O. box to conduct magazine business. Mail from two correspondents in particular always turned up opened, partially destroyed, or never made it to me. One of them was a cattle mutilation researcher named Peter Jordan. Most of his letters arrived partially opened or torn and then placed in plastic bags with notes of apology from the Post Office about problems in transit or with their machinery. I once interviewed Jordan on a live radio program and we both agreed to continue the interview in the next week or so. He called just before the second show and said that he was getting out of research because it was becoming too disturbing for him. He never answered another call or letter from me.

The other friend that had problems with the mail was abduction researcher Karla Turner. Almost everything she sent was opened and resealed with tape, or damaged and stuffed into the same sort of plastic bags as Jordan's letters. After I told her about this, she would write "SEALED BY SENDER" across the seal on her envelopes, and put clear packing tape over that. The tampering stopped.

Since it is easy to open and reseal mail with little or no evidence, I figured that someone wanted me to know that they were watching. Not a very good feeling.

After about a year or two of this weirdness, I was almost afraid of my own shadow. Reaching back into my occult training and some advice from Robert Anton Wilson, I made a conscious decision to stop worrying about any supposed surveillance and to stop drawing any conclusions from events like those I have described. It was just taking too much of a toll on me and I

was tired of it. It was difficult for awhile, since I was almost addicted to the paranoia in much the same way that goths, emos, and non-clinical depressives are in love with negativity. In a recent short film by one of my favorite animators, one of the characters declares: “I am very proud of my sadness, because it means I am more alive.”[1]

Eventually I came out of my own room of Chapel Perilous with a higher degree of general happiness than I had before, and a mindset that looked at coincidences and synchronicities as dispassionately as possible. Wilson was right. I was a raving paranoid transformed into a complete agnostic.

Agnosticism about the meaning of strange input is like a spiritual path. I like it.

[1]*World Of Tomorrow*. Written, directed, animated by Don Hertzfeldt. Voices by Julia Pott and Winona Mae. 2015, Bitter Films.

A Strange Dream
6/11/2007

I met Nick in an outdoor setting. He was clothed in his standard uniform: black leather jacket, t-shirt, jeans, and high-top sneakers. One thing that puzzled me about his physical appearance was that he had a full head of graying hair, reaching down past his shoulders. He stared ominously at me in a three-quarter profile and said one sentence: “Roswell was real.” I took this to mean that he had settled on the standard aliens-in-the-UFO scenario rather than the story in his gripping book, *Body Snatchers In The Desert*.

Turning away as my attention was directed elsewhere, Nick apparently did a quick change and when I looked back, he was smiling and back to his usual hairless self. At this point, he repudiated what he had just said and went back to his agnostic stance. Later in the dream, I explored a functioning laboratory on what was apparently an abandoned military base. That’s all I remember.

The hairy version of Nick may be due to the fact that I have been watching tapes of David Lynch’s old *Twin Peaks* TV show for the past week. “Bob,” (played by Frank Silva) the evil non-corporeal entity that

possesses unsuspecting characters in the show has long, graying hair. Perhaps this symbolizes the evil that I believe is inherent in faith-based belief systems when it comes to the subject of UFOs. Interestingly, the program features a character who is an Air Force Major, and who worked on project Blue Book with another player in the story. It is intimated that some sort of contact with an evil force possessed this man while he investigated a UFO flap. [See Lynch article on page 23 for more on this.]

Interpret away, readers!

From 1992 to 1999, I edited and published a magazine called The Excluded Middle*. The following is a pre-*UFOmystic *article on how that came to be.*

What's An "Excluded Middle" And Why Should I Care?
12/09/2006

If you look up "Excluded Middle" in Wikipedia, the definition is actually the exact opposite to the idea we had when we started the magazine of the same name. It stems from an Aristotilean premise that an idea must be either true or false--that there is no way that something can be both true and not true at the same time. This is an idea that I strongly disagree with when dealing with UFOs and other assorted anomalies. Somehow, this is a perfect reason to use it – turn a definition on its head and use it against the inquisition.

In 1991, I was at a party with two good friends, Peter Stenshoel and Robert Larson. We were bemoaning the fact that we couldn't find any up-to-date info on the sort of Ufology/anomalies issues that excited us. We had weaned ourselves on Hynek, APRO, Keyhoe and the like, but then discovered researchers and thinkers like Jacques Vallée, Dennis Stillings, Robert Anton Wilson, Jim Brandon, John Keel, Jim Keith and Keith Thompson. Where were these voices in the contemporary literature, and why weren't the obvious connections between UFOs and the paranormal, "conspiracy theories," the psychedelic experience and western occultism and eastern thought being discussed? Being young and dumb, we thought we could change things, perhaps at least a little, by exposing some unpopular ideas to the world.

I don't know what changes happened to my partners over the course of the next decade, but the experience of producing *The Excluded Middle* as a magazine changed me forever. For the longest time, I didn't know what I was doing, but I find that that this is the method that produces some of the most interesting results in writing, music, and many other creative endeavours. Later, the magazine became a vehicle for discovery, and instead of merely informing others of our findings, the act of writing, editing, and running the 'zine became a second education. One of my partners later refused to talk to me for almost three years, and I had to find out the hard way that I needed to rethink the way that I interacted with my friends. The other part of my "second education" provided me with not only a platform for pontification, but more importantly an opportunity to speak personally with authors and thinkers who affected me deeply with their ideas.

The name came from an outstanding science fiction radio drama series that Peter wrote, acted in and produced entitled "Little City in Space." Look it up if you get a chance. Peter wrote a fake commercial directed at androids who wanted to become more human. "Discover the secrets of the excluded middle" was the tagline that ended the piece. We took it to mean that there was a largely unexplored middle ground of neither belief nor non-belief with regard to strange subjects, and we saw little evidence of it in the popular literature of the time.

Perhaps the best way I can express how I feel about the term is with an alleged quote from a spaceman who showed Nebraska patrolman Herbert Schirmer around his ship in 1967 and left him with this piece of wisdom: "We want you to believe in us, but not too much."

Three Psychic Experiences
11/15/2008

While many people I know have been blessed or cursed with "second sight," Only three times have I experienced what might be called "psychic episodes." It has been noted that some people can only consider ESP and other related phenomena when they have had their own encounters. Perhaps I was primed with a hopeful skepticism before it happened to me. All three incidents occurred while I was publishing my magazine, *The Excluded*

Middle, so there might be some merit here in immersing oneself in fringe subjects, while still maintaining a discerning mindset.

In issue #6, I tried a "remote viewing" experiment/ contest where I asked readers to guess about something that was hidden in my house. Anyone who was close enough (according to my arbitrary rules of judging) won the prize. I wanted to try this for myself first, so following instructions found in Joe McMoneagle's book *Mind Trek*, I got a friend to hide something in his house, and I did the same. We agreed to meet in a few days to compare notes.

Both of our trials were startlingly accurate. Out of the thousands of objects in my home, he guessed the exact target. I came very close to the one he had hidden. My notes said that the object was a "ball attached to a cylinder or long box, and had a multi-colored look." It turned out that he had chosen a Pez dispenser with Miss Piggy's head on the top. Beginner's luck was working for us that first time, since subsequent trials were disastrously poor.

A few months later, I was rounding the corner driving down the street on my way home. For some reason, I mentally flashed on a package sitting behind the front door. I saw a black plastic bag that I knew was for me. I didn't worry about how it had been passed through a locked door.

When I opened the door, there was the bag, just as I had seen it in my mind a minute before. Inside it was a t-shirt from the Assassination Museum in Dallas that a friend delivered for me. He managed to squeeze it under the door by fitting it around the weather stripping. I only discovered this later when he called, asking if I had received the gift.

Probably one of the most important interviews that I conducted for the magazine was with parapsychologist Dean Radin. Our conversation was so meaningful to me that I included the entire interview in the book release of *Excluded Middle*, coincidentally titled *Wake Up Down There!*, which was released in 2000. This personal significance may be part of the reason for my "psychic episode."

The night before the interview, I was visiting my co-editor Robert Larson at his home. We were having glasses of beer and talking about my troubled marriage and impending divorce. Finishing my glass, I went to the kitchen to wash it out with cold water. As I turned off the water and started to put the glass on a drying rack, there was a loud "pop" and the glass literally exploded in my hand. Pieces flew at least ten feet across the floor.

Some shards actually ended up in the laundry room. A few slivers of the glass were still stuck to my hand as I stared in amazement.

During the interview, I told Dr. Radin about this. He thought about this for a bit and said, "Well, don't you see that this might have been the appropriate thing to happen at this time. You are under stress, and perhaps this was externalized in the breaking glass."

I was also reminded of the famous episode of the "explosion in the bookcase."

> Jung wanted to know what Freud thought about parapsychological phenomena and precognitions…Freud never offered a sustained account [of the conversation], but in Jung's version, he "absolutely" rejected both, which caused Jung to accuse him of "materialistic bias" and to persist stubbornly in describing his own personal experiences. When he told of the knife that shattered [a large knife lying in a drawer in Jung's house had once spontaneously shattered into pieces in the presence of his psychic cousin], Freud "expressed such a flat positivism" that Jung found it difficult "not to respond in a way that would have been a bit too biting."…
>
> Suddenly, there occurred such a noise from the glass-fronted bookcase in front of which they were sitting that they both jumped, fearing it would fall on them. "Now this is a so-called catalytic exteriorization phenomenon," Jung insisted. "Oh, no, that is complete nonsense," Freud replied. To prove his point, Jung insisted that there would be another noise, and immediately there was "an indescribably terrible noise in the cabinet!"

I pointed this out to Radin as an earlier example of "unintentional psychokinesis," and he agreed that there was a host of anecdotal evidence for these occurrences.

There are of course numerous examples of "psychic Michael Jordans," but many of us make that "nothing but net" shot from across the court only once or twice in a lifetime.

My Own "UFO" Sighting

6/17/2008

While driving north on Highway 5 just north of Orange County on Saturday night, I saw something quite startling in the sky. But it wasn't just me, reports soon appeared online describing exactly what I witnessed.

My sister and I were coming back from San Diego at about 11:50PM on June 14th when something flashed across the sky in the upper left corner of the windshield. It was so startling that I took my foot off the accelerator and was about to hit the brakes. At first, I thought it was some sort of fireworks display, but Disneyland was 10 miles behind us.

What I saw was a very bright, gold point of light which left a bright green streak behind it. Parallel and right next to the green trail was a line of smoke or debris which disappeared or became invisible when the object no longer gave off any light. The entire event lasted little more than one second. In that time, the green streak covered about 30 degrees of the sky. It appeared to be headed north and possibly towards the ground, although this could have been an illusion if the object was at an extreme altitude. Reports of this event have also been logged from as far north as British Columbia.

Friends and acquaintances here in Southern California have seen other strange green, streaking objects over the last decade or so, but the sightings are not as spectacular. The last one I observed looked as if it was shooting straight towards the ground from what was no more than 2000 feet, right over the middle of Los Angeles in the late afternoon. Others I have spoken with have recalled similar experiences.

These sightings share many similarities with the "green fireball" phenomenon, which plagued the New Mexico skies in the late 1940s and early '50s. The events so disturbed the Air Force and other authorities that they ordered a study (eventually organized as "Project Twinkle") that included meteorite expert Dr. Lincoln La Paz. Despite their concerns that the objects might have been some kind of Soviet probes, no evidence was ever found to support this idea. Nevertheless, La Paz could come up with no other explanation, and settled on the artificial probe theory.

In 1952, Project Blue Book head Edward Ruppelt was informed by scientists at the Los Alamos National Laboratory of their theory that the fireballs represented some sort of objects launched from ET craft orbiting the Earth. Of course, this was not made public until many years later.

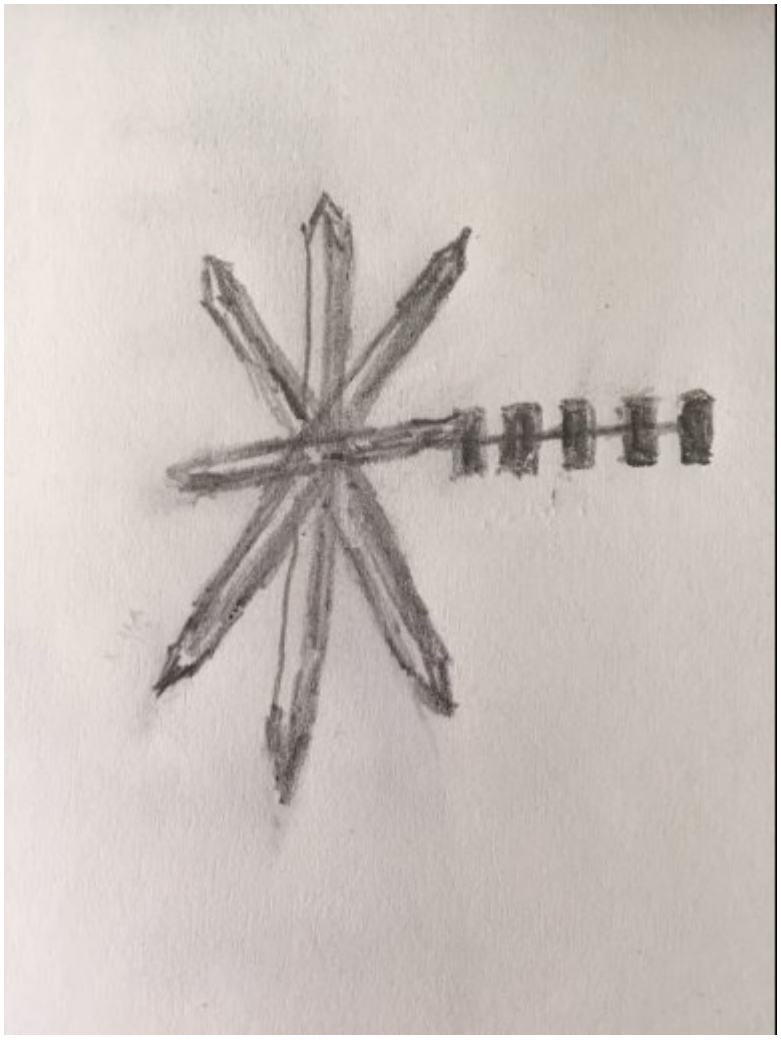
On July 24, 1949, a green fireball shot over Soccoro, New Mexico, and personnel from the School of Mines were able to collect samples. They found that it contained large particles of copper, which would account for the observed color. Copper burns with a bright green color. Most meteorites are composed of silicate materials and other trace elements, but little or no copper.

As far as I know, no one has been able to determine what causes green meteorites or fireballs. They may not even be meteorites, but they are undeniably a real phenomenon.

[From the American Meteor Society website: The dominant composition of a meteoroid can play an important part in the observed colors of a fireball, with certain elements displaying signature colors when vaporized. For example, sodium produces a bright yellow color, nickel shows as green, and magnesium as blue-white. http://www.amsmeteors.org/fireballs/faqf/ – G.B. 2015.]

My Truly Unexplained (So Far) Sighting
4/3/2011

Last Wednesday (3/30/2011) I went flying in a Cessna 172 small plane piloted by my friend Chad Bastian. We departed Santa Barbara Municipal Airport at 6:15 PM and soon encountered such violent turbulence that we went weightless in our seats a few times. We landed without incident almost 45 minutes later, but as I was leaving the airport to pull onto the highway, my attention was drawn to an apparent object hanging motionless in the air over the end of runway 15, which ends a few hundred yards before the shoreline. It was about 15 minutes before sunset, and there was still enough light to see most objects clearly.



It appeared to be about 100-200 feet off the ground and was not there when we took off from that runway 45 minutes earlier, or we would almost certainly have seen it, since it was right in our takeoff path (or at least directly under it.) The object was about 1/2 to 3/4 of a mile away from me and a few hundred feet inland from the shoreline.

It appeared as an eight-armed, three dimensional thing that was perhaps 50-80 feet in diameter (see drawing.) The entire affair was deep black, or appeared so in the waning light. If it was a kite, the “tail” was facing into the wind. Kites also tend to move at least a little, but this unidentified object did not appear to move an inch. The “arms” ended in apparent tapered points, and there was a line of regularly-spaced rectangular shapes extending perpendicular to the main body, with a line running through them. The “arms” were all the same length and the orientation of the shape

was perpendicular to the ground, not at an angle as it would be if it were being held up by the wind.

Like an idiot, I was in a hurry to get back to L.A. and didn't drive the extra distance to take a look at the strange object. I shall return to the spot this week to see if it was an ordinary (permanent) object seen under poor circumstances, or remains unidentified. If it was unusual, surely pilots, motorists, or beachgoers would have seen it, but I can find no reference online to anything unusual in the area last week.

UPDATE: I drove to the site yesterday (4/5) at 3:30 PM. There was nothing in the air or on the ground that would account for the object I saw. The site is 1/4 mile from one of the entrances to UC Santa Barbara, so perhaps it was a class project or experiment of some kind. There is a public beach and park below where the object was apparently stationed. There were no lifeguards or other personnel present when I drove through the park, or I would have asked them about it. I will try to show up at the site near sunset and check to see if the object is something that is launched at twilight, or remains unexplained. [Further update: Someone from the University told me a few days later that there was nothing that they knew about at that place at that time.]

Dr. Richard Strassman And DMT Aliens
6/02/2008

Yesterday at the American Bookseller's Expo here in Los Angeles, I had the good fortune to meet up with Dr. Rick Strassman, author of *DMT: The Spirit Molecule*. (For background on Strassman, see the article on "Aliens And Drugs" on page 198.) He was signing books at the Park Street Press booth, publishers of his new (co-written) volume, *Inner Paths To Outer Space*.

Strassman continues to write and lecture about his experience working with subjects who were injected with the psychoactive drug Di-Methyl Tryptamine (DMT) during a five-year scientific study in the 1990s. He told me that he is going to Brazil soon to lead a study group looking into the effects of the ayahuasca brew, which shamans have been using for thousands of years to access realms beyond our normal senses.

I asked how he came to believe (as a classically-trained scientist) that psychedelic experiences were not just mind-created hallucinations. He had a reflective reply:

"According to my training and some of the negative things people said about the study, I concluded that the whole experiment was a wash, but this tended to demean the reality of the experience for the subjects involved." [Paraphrasing here – I'm going from memory.]

Strassman also remarked that the consistency of reports from those under the influence of psychoactive compounds, not only in his study, but across history, points convincingly to the idea that our perception of reality is not confined to the five senses. This can be extrapolated to the concepts that we use to describe our surroundings–we may be partially trapped in a construct of the world derived from our normal sensory input. We are also laboring under a culture that pushes one point of view of how we should look at things. "We don't realize that we're an aberration in history," Strassman added.

Perhaps the subjects in the DMT study, a portion of whom described experiences strikingly similar to what we would consider an alien abduction, were influenced by their culture and stories they had read. Strassman assured me that not only had some not known the details of reported UFO abductions, but that he knew of accounts from cultures who have had little or no contact with civilization that also described UFOs and alien-like entities while under the influence of psychoactive plants, and that his had occurred before contact with those from outside of their culture.

Strassman described a surprising study from northern California. He was not forthcoming with any details, but interest in his ideas and work is now apparently coming from the ranks of MUFON members, who are sponsoring a project based on these controversial theories. This is certainly a hopeful sign that new generations of UFO researchers are willing to push some boundaries.

On The Road With The "Mirage Men"
5/06/2007

I am working on a documentary that is shooting around the U.S. for a few weeks in May. Produced by John Lundberg and Mark Pilkington, the

film promises to be groundbreaking in the most literal sense of the metaphor.

Mirage Men will examine the history of intelligence community involvement in the UFO subject. While many other features have approached this important issue in piecemeal fashion, Pilkington and Lundberg decided last year to meet the problem head-on and put various players on the spot to possibly clear up what was (and is) being done to UFO researchers under the umbrella of national defense.

The producers have managed to secure interviews with Ufological and intelligence personalities from all over the country, including Curtis Peebles, Victor Martinez, Bill Ryan, Tracy Torme, Robert Emenegger, Gabe Valdez, and even Richard Doty. (I believe that this is Doty's one and only appearance ever on camera.) One other intelligence player (who has been around the disinfo game for over 30 years) will most likely appear only in voiceover, with his speech disguised to protect his identity, at his own request. Perhaps we'll hear some new revelations stretching back to the Paul Bennewitz days and offering new insights to that dramatic period when intel agents skulked about in the shadows, feeding outlandish stories to gullible researchers eager for the newest revelation.

Just as the producers were gearing up for production last April, the SERPO story was breaking out and they were just in time to meet some of the players and interested parties at Bob Brown's annual Laughlin UFO conclave. We sat down for beers and stories with Richard Doty, while other less well-known names were rumored to be sneaking about the premises, monitoring the reaction to the newest drama. The *Mirage Men* producers shut me in a room with SERPO webmaster Bill Ryan and a video camera and we debated the merits of the story for almost two hours. I'll be surprised if any of it makes the final cut.

The next week, we were in Albuquerque, where the Paul Bennewitz saga all went down, talking to Doty and Gabe Valdez about their recollections of the period. Valdez was very kind and helpful, and provided us with a view of what was going on around Dulce, New Mexico over twenty years ago when he was a State Police officer for the area. He talked about his suspicion that there may have indeed been some sort of underground facility there, but not one built or used by aliens, as Bennewitz was told.

Mirage Men is an independent production, and I hope that Pilkington and Lundberg can work out a distribution deal with someone here in the States (they are from the U.K.) I of course have no control over the editing process, but from the footage shot so far, the final product should be a landmark overview of the history and motivations of the intelligence community and it's use of the UFO subject as a tool for gathering information as well as baiting people who interest them.

Three former intel officers have told the production (on camera) that the UFO subject is taken seriously by a lot of their colleagues, and are sure that there is some sort of non-human intelligence present on this planet. While this is nothing new, it reiterates the idea that while there may be "aliens" interacting with us from time to time, the powers that be have little idea where these things come from or how to control the situation. Government UFO "insiders" have been hinting at this scenario for decades now. In fact, when someone who claims to be revealing inside info on UFOs makes a definitive statement on the subject, it should raise red flags in the mind of any reasonable person.

Dulce The Same But Not The Same
5/10/2007

We visited the town of Dulce, New Mexico today, the cultural center of the Jicarilla Apache tribe here in the far northern reaches of the state. When I drove through here in the early 1990s, I recall something like three buildings huddled around the crossroads. Now there's a giant supermarket, two casinos, and a brand new school. It's interesting that there are bars and liquor stores in town, considering Indian reservations and their prohibitions on alcohol.

Producer Mark Pilkington and I drove around the base of the Archuleta Mesa and realized that this is some of the most incredibly beautiful scenery in the country. It is also the perfect place to hide UFOs or tests of exotic aircraft because of the mountainous, heavily forested territory. This must have occurred to Paul Bennewitz in the mid-1980s too, since he was convinced that this mysterious region was home to one of most dastardly threats we ever had to face: evil aliens living in an underground base somewhere inside the mesa. Of course, as I point out in my book on the

period (*Project Beta*) this belief was stage-managed by the U.S. Air Force. To date, I have heard of no credible evidence that this was the case, although I have heard from a few people (some of them former residents) that there was some sort of hidden facility near here, but it had nothing to do with an extraterrestrial threat. There is also the matter of strange lights that flew over the area almost nightly, and of course the cattle mutilation mystery. Dulce was ground zero for this horrifying plague.

We drove into Colorado for a few miles, just south of the infamous San Luis Valley. On the way back into New Mexico, on a small gravel road winding next to the Navajo River, we spied not one, but TWO cattle dead in the middle of a fenced-in pasture. There were no predators around them, and one appeared to be in a worse state of decomposition than the other. The rest of the herd stood well away from them, in another area of the ranch. Mutilation site? Maybe, but probably not. Predators may have scattered when they heard us driving up (in fact a crow took flight from his perch on one of the carcasses) and the other cattle were in a fenced-in area adjacent to their dead compatriots. We weren't about to trespass for a closer look, but the sight added a touch of drama to a nice day in the picturesque area around Dulce.

We are not allowed to film anything on tribal land, but that didn't stop the crew from getting some beautiful shots (from outside the border of the reservation of course) of a storm cell that moved through in the late afternoon, complete with lighting strikes and a double rainbow, and snow-covered mountains in the background. Dramatic stuff which should help make the documentary *Mirage Men* one-of-a-kind.

Working On A Movie
9/22/2008

As some of you may know, I'm in Nova Scotia working on a film with my good friend Paul Kimball. He is producing and directing his script entitled *Eternal Kiss*, a vampire romance. Paul hired me on as the production supervisor, and the learning curve has been steep and quick. Opportunities for self-starting occur daily, and I am starting to piecemeal some of the responsibilities out to others (in other words, to delegate.)

Since it's not a big-budget film, everyone has to do a few different jobs, so I've carted coffee and snacks around as well as helped to secure filming locations and dealt with local businesses and the management of the studio and living complex. Of course, when people find out that I write about "that there UFO stuff," some want to ask my opinions and occasionally tell me about their own experiences.

I found that I share a passion for flight with one of the lead actors, David Connellan. This led to a lengthy discussion about aerial unidentifieds. Connellan, a native Nova Scotian, told the story of a family trip along the Atlantic coast in 1981. While tooling along late at night, he says his mother noticed a strange set of lights traveling along the shore, which moved to the rear of their station wagon and hovered at about 500 feet above the roadway and 300 feet from the car. He and his mum watched as the thing, which looked like a large, circular white light trailed by three smaller white lights, quickly shot straight up through the low cloud cover and disappeared from sight. "When you see something like that, you have to think that something strange is going on" he said. I told him about my ideas of believing vs. knowing, and he agreed that reading or talking about UFOs as opposed to actually seeing one is quite different.

The studio is a decommissioned joint American/Canadian submarine hunting base, which was closed in 1995, after almost 40 years of continuous operation. The facility used a system of underwater microphones to listen for Soviet subs during the cold war. We actually found the remnants of one of the control rooms with hundreds of cables snaking beneath a false floor. Current owner Jim Kendrick told me that there is an underground facility here, but that the entrance was plugged with a 10-foot-thick layer of concrete when the base was closed.

This place was also involved in the famous Shag Harbour incident of October, 1967. The object that splashed into the ocean apparently moved and took up temporary residence under the waters off of Shelburne, a small fishing town on the southern coast of Nova Scotia, and just a few miles from here.

According to Wikipedia:

> …further evidence attributed to various military and civilian witnesses might imply a highly secretive military search involving a small flotilla of U.S. and Canadian ships about 30 miles to the

> NE of Shag Harbour near Shelburne, site of a top secret submarine detection base. According to one military witness, he was allegedly briefed that the object had originally been picked up on radar coming out of Siberia. After crashing in Shag Harbour, it traveled underwater up the coast and came to rest on top of the submarine magnetic detection grid near Shelburne, where it was supposedly joined by a second vehicle. Ships were anchored there for a week, according to the witnesses, in an attempt to recover the object.[2]

One witness (and former soldier stationed at the base) actually told Kendrick and his business partner about his own involvement with the incident, confirming the details uncovered by earlier researchers. Barstow told me that the man physically shook with recalled emotions. It all tends to make me look at the picturesque whitecapped surface of the Atlantic just offshore here with a strange sense of history and place.

While this ultimately proves very little, it does make my stay here even more interesting.

[2]https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shag_Harbour_UFO_incident

Was That A Piece of a UFO?
12/15/08

What would you do if someone gave you a couple of pieces of a crashed UFO?

On May 5th and 6th of 2001, I attended the 32nd Annual Conference On Anomalous Phenomena put on by the International Fortean Organization (INFO) in Baltimore, Maryland. Arriving a couple of days early, I decided to visit the home of my recently deceased friend Dr. Mario Pazzaglini [see chapter 9]. His partner James (whose surname I have unfortunately forgotten) showed and allowed me to make color copies of many of Mario's artworks from voluminous notebooks, many of which are intricate images for meditation.

At one point he asked "Do you want to see a piece of a flying saucer?"

There's only one answer to that question, so he brought out a lead-lined bag and produced a fragment of shiny metal about two by four inches, and

perhaps 1.5 inches thick. “Mario didn’t know if the pieces were radioactive, so he kept them in a protected container,” James said. “But there’s only one,” I answered.

James told me that Pazzaglini had given the other one to the University of Delaware for analysis. Since he was on the faculty there (or used to be) I gather that the testing and report was either cheap or free. Mario waited a few weeks for the results and finally called to ask how the work was going. He was told that the fragment had been lost somehow. Make up your own conspiracy theory, but he still had the other one, which I examined.

It was heavier than it looked. It was very smooth, almost polished, but looked as if it had been violently torn from a larger element under great heat. The opposite side contained a rougher surface. This appeared to be an area that had been torn away, but the protrusions were rounded, as if the pieces were still molten when they had separated from the larger body of metal.

James could not remember where Mario had obtained the artifacts, or who had given them to him.

A couple of years afterwards, James told me that he had given this fragment to Linda Howe. I don’t know if she still has it, but I suspect that any analysis that she might have been able to get revealed nothing spectacular, or we would have heard about it. Perhaps she just forgot about the object and someone (me?) should ask what became of this mysterious piece of metal.

P.S. In the comments at UFOmystic, it was determined that the fragment was most likely a piece of pure silicon. It looked a lot like this:

3 - People Make This World: Friends, Historical Figures, Weirdos and Others

In 1994, writer/trickster Jim Moseley told me "There's no hope of solving the [UFO] question. There's endless confusion and contradictory theories, so certainly the UFO field is real, whether the saucers are or not, and the people are real, and some of them are very interesting. I have more fun with the people…"

Over the years, I've met many researchers and writers, became friends with a few, and laughed at (and with) some. Some are gone and I miss them terribly (such as Mac Tonnies – illustrated above). Others I never met, but were interesting enough to write about, and when appropriate, recall in historical context, such as "Long" John Nebel, 1960s and '70s radio host of the offbeat.

(The title of this chapter is something my mother is fond of repeating to me.)

William S. Burroughs, Whitley Strieber, and UFOs
5/01/2007

One night a couple of years ago, I was privileged to have dinner with Whitley Strieber, his wife Anne, and a few other UFO researchers. While there were hundreds of things I wanted to discuss with Strieber, one subject that really interested me was the rumor I'd heard that he had invited William S. Burroughs (one of my favorite authors) to his famous cabin in upstate New York.

Strieber said that Burroughs had indeed visited his retreat in the woods, made famous in the *Communion* books, not once, but twice as I recall. Apparently, Burroughs wished to encounter the "visitors" firsthand. Unfortunately, nothing notable happened when he was there. He told me that Burroughs was almost overly polite and very curious about Strieber's unusual experiences.

It seems natural that someone who had written about drugs, Mayan gods and paranormal voices would seek contact with extra-human intelligence. Burroughs most likely saw it as an opportunity to examine and perhaps question something or someone who inhabited the realms beyond western, 20th century ideas of "reality." Without specifically mentioning it in his writings, Burroughs was treading the path of the occultist and shaman. What he found, among other secrets, was something that had been there all along: the struggle between good and evil, freedom and control.

William Burroughs' reference points were outside most of ours. Like any explorer, he searched for the highest peak for a better point of view. If he could establish some sort of connection with non-human intelligence, he may have thought he could finally crack the hard shell of what he called the "Nova Conspiracy": one of his models for the drive that makes some humans seek total control of others. Burroughs was apparently convinced that this meme was so dastardly that it had to be due to an outside influence, namely what we would sometimes call "aliens." It probably did not matter to him if the contact was with "good" or "bad" aliens. He could glean information from either source.

The ultimate goal, it seems, would have been to reveal what he had found and use the information to free the rest of us from our illusion of freedom when (as he saw it) we are ultimately controlled at the most basic

level by artificial constraints put on our thoughts by those who wish us to remain mentally enslaved to the idea that we have no control over our own destiny.

Whatever Happened To "Klark Kent: Super Science?"
4/06/2007

At the 1989 "Bill Moore" MUFON convention, I reacquainted myself with the UFO subculture. The antics of people like Bill Cooper, John Lear, and others of their group fascinated me and made me laugh. Were they on to something, or were they just deluded? I preferred at that time to take a long view of things, and let the future and my discernment decide.

One character who made an immediate impression on me was a man who silently walked around the hotel and meeting rooms holding a small box with multicolored lights flickering on top. He never spoke to anyone, and always seemed to be moving. I remember him dressed in a light-colored suit, wearing a serious/ mysterious look on his face. He was always impeccably groomed. Later, I learned that he was selling UFO detectors and anti-abduction machines, or some such, and calling himself "Klark Kent: Super Science."

A few years later, the magazine I was editing received an unsolicited videotape in the mail. On the spine was a label reading "Klark Kent, UFO Expert on the Love Hour." While visiting in Berkeley with my friends Wes Nations and Dave Reimer, we watched the tape and ended up on the floor in laughing fits.

The title of the show was actually *Andy and Pat's Groovy Cosmic Love Hour*, (http://www.bigbeef.com/lovehour/groovy.htm) which already puts it ahead of the pack in entertaining cheapness factor. It was apparently produced for public access in Dayton Ohio. Smiling and hiding behind cheap sunglasses, Andy did all of the talking, while Pat, his amazonian companion, sat quietly on the set. Kent launched into a lecture complete with slides photographed from countless UFO books.

The call-in segment was a classic. An old lady came on the line and asked Kent where he got his credentials to be a "UFO Expert." After reeling off a list of books he'd read, he added that UFOs would ultimately gain credence in the forum of "American business." We gathered that he was

suggesting the idea could be sold to the public like any product, and added that this had been proven by everyone from Henry Ford to the "Apple brothers." This cryptic remark was soon deciphered: he meant the "Steve brothers," Jobs and Wozniak. How this translated to the UFO problem remained a mystery. In short order, the woman had enough and hollered "You're an expert on *crap*!" before she slammed down the phone.

After a brief search today, I found Kent online, now selling the "Multiple Wave Oscillator: An experimental Tesla Technology device for human rejuvenation!" and going by his presumably real name, Bruce M. Forrester, Jr. The device is apparently a sort of portable Integratron, and comes complete with a violet ray wand! It can be yours for only $3,960.00 post paid. (I already have a violet ray device, so maybe he can cut me a deal.)

We should be thankful that Kent/Forrester is still around and taking the advice of the space brothers and his own talent and intuition to heal mankind, for a nominal fee.

"Long" John Nebel: The Art Bell of the 1950s
12/31/2007

Most fans of *Coast To Coast AM* aren't aware that late night paranormal radio is nothing new. Along with master raconteur and storyteller Jean Shepherd, "Long" John Nebel ruled the overnight airwaves on New York station WOR from the mid-1950s to the early '60s. Shepherd lasted there in one form or another until 1977. In 1962, Nebel was offered the then-ridiculous sum of $100,000 per year to move over to rival station WNBC, which he unridiculously accepted.

Originally from Chicago, Nebel (1911-1978) dropped out of school in the eighth grade and ran away with the circus. In the autobiographical section of his 1961 book *The Way Out World*, he described filling in for a clown that had called in sick to a parade, and then convinced the circus owner to hire him full time. He soon befriended "Lady Ester," the woman who did the mind-reading act, and quickly found out that it was a complete scam. Nebel didn't care so much about the reality of ESP, he was fascinated with the selling of the product.

In the early 1950s, he owned and operated Long John's Auctions in New Jersey. Since he often bought advertising time on New York radio stations, his contacts led to an offer of the midnight-to-5:30 AM slot to discuss strange and offbeat topics, and interview weird and interesting people.

The show soon became the highest-rated program on the station. The fact that WOR's signal could be heard over half the nation assured an audience of millions. Entitled "The Partyline," the program usually featured a revolving guest "panel" of scholars, commentators, writers and anyone Nebel found interesting. Frequent panel guests included Arthur C. Clarke, James Moseley, and The Amazing Randi.

Nebel provided a virtual soapbox for the UFO contactee movement, and the likes of George Adamski, Orfeo Angelucci, and Howard Menger were popular, and appeared on the show many times. Another guest was UFO researcher and book huckster Gray Barker, who once got into a famous on-air argument with listener and long-time Nebel buddy Jackie Gleason. Gleason had a well-known interest in UFOs, and saw Barker's sometimes humorous take on the subject as a hindrance to serious study. For Gleason the comedian, the funny business apparently stopped at the flying saucer's doorstep.

One of Nebel's most infamous guests was Otis T. Carr, who was peddling his plans for the "OTC-X1 Circular Foil Spacecraft." Carr claimed that he came up with the original idea when he was a night clerk at the Hotel New Yorker in the 1930s. Nikola Tesla was living there at the time, and Carr said that the great inventor revealed fantastic scientific secrets to him "which he [Tesla] never told to another soul." In 1958, Carr appeared on Nebel's show on multiple occasions to advertise the OTC-X1, which could be yours for the low introductory price of 200 million dollars. Nebel actually traveled to Oklahoma City where Carr was supposed to demonstrate the first public flight of his mysterious invention (appropriately as it turned out) on the grounds of an amusement park. Not surprisingly, it was a bust. Carr was later arrested, tried, and imprisoned for stock fraud.

This short biography would not be complete without mention of Nebel's 1972 marriage to former model and pin-up girl Candy Jones. Jones became co-host on the show, and assisted in many aspects of production. Soon after they were wed, Nebel noticed that his new wife would occasionally lapse into what appeared to be an alternate personality. After

he suggested hypnosis to uncover any problems, a strange story of CIA mind control emerged, as documented in Donald Bain's 1976 book The *Control of Candy Jones*. Nebel and Jones supposedly recorded hundreds of hours of her hypnosis sessions. Jones claimed that an Oakland psychologist (a "Dr. Jensen") had been her handler and had successfully forced her (though hypnotic suggestion and torture) to run missions for the CIA.

Nebel's famous skepticism seemed to fail him when convincing evidence of a conspiracy hit close to home, and publicly claimed that he wanted to kill Jensen. The influence of this strange episode occasionally permeated his final years in radio, which ended in 1978. When he retired, the show slot was given to Larry King.

The next time you listen to the likes of George Noory, Tim Binnall, or even my show, remember "Long" John Nebel and his pioneering brand of freeform radio for night people.

Nebel died from complications of prostate cancer on April 10, 1978.

Visiting A Gravesite
9/18/2009

In 2009, Nick Redfern and I were invited to speak at the Angel Fire UFO conference in northern New Mexico. When I realized that we would pass through Santa Fe on our drive, I suggested we stop at Paul Bennewitz' grave and pay our respects.

While in New Mexico for a conference, Nick and I visited the grave of Paul Bennewitz, whose tragic story I documented in my book *Project Beta*. We arrived in the late afternoon as the sun was setting over the State Capitol.

We had little trouble finding the grave, as the Santa Fe National Cemetery is laid out with the expected military precision. Nick asked me to say a few words as he ran his digital recorder. I expressed a sort of gratitude for living through what must have been a personal hell that I was allowed to recount in the book.

His story is a little-known but important chapter in the history of UFOs and one way in which the subject is treated and used by the intelligence services of the U.S. Government. I regret that I never got the chance to meet

Paul Bennewitz. He passed away the week before I arrived in New Mexico to begin research for the book.

The simple marker (strangely weathered in comparison to older ones around it) reads:

PAUL FREDERICK BENNEWITZ, JR.
SIC U.S. COAST GUARD
WORLD WAR II
SEPT. 30, 1927 JUN 23, 2003

Mac Tonnies was a writer, fortean, and futurist. He was one of those friends who finishes your thoughts and takes it to the next level and gives you the credit. He will be best remembered for two books, After The Martian Apocalypse *and* The Cryptoterrestrials. *The first was an examination of Mars anomalies that looked dispassionately at evidence for an ancient civilization on the planet. The second, posthumously published book presented the possibility that UFOs and related phenomena could be the result of an unknown, humanoid race which furtively inhabits this planet with us. I was once asked if Mac believed in the things he wrote. He believed in exploring ideas in a balanced and thought-provoking way without wedding himself to any particular theory. That is rare and one of the reasons why we got along so well. His writing from posthumanblues.com has been preserved online and in a book published by our mutual friend Paul Kimball.*

Last night, Nick Redfern called to tell me that our friend and colleague Mac Tonnies was found in his apartment on Thursday afternoon, apparently dead of natural causes. There was no evidence of foul play or suicide according to a close friend.

Mac's family have been informed, and we wanted to get the news out to people who either knew Mac, or were inspired by his original and highly intelligent contributions to the study of UFOs and other anomalies, as well as many aspects of leading-edge science and technology. Just an indescribable loss.

The last time we talked was just after his appearance on *Coast To Coast* on September 28th. I called as soon as he hung up with the show. He asked

if I thought he had done a good job. I said he hit one over the fence.

I have gone through a range of emotions. At first, I was hoping that this was some sort of ridiculous joke. As this became increasingly difficult to believe, acceptance set in. In regard to my feelings, I tend to play things close to the vest, but talking with Nick and a close local friend of Mac's over the last day or so, things became clearer in my heart and mind.

As I said in the comments to my first post, it is rare to find someone who is a friend and a personal hero. Mac was both, and that hasn't happened to me very often. Paul Kimball introduced us in 2005, and soon after, Mac sent me a copy of his first major book, *After The Martian Apocalypse*. What I found after reading it and talking further with the author was a mind that was truly inquisitive, skeptical, ruled by a sense of equity, ready to see the humor inherent in the paranormal and keenly intelligent.

We had many talks on a range of topics, and Mac always intrigued me with concepts that I either hadn't thought of, or of which I was only barely aware. He never failed to amaze and make me laugh. In the last few weeks, we discussed co-authoring a fictional work based on some of our conversations. The manuscript for his last book was near to being finished with the final edit, and ready for submission.

Many did not know that Mac was a talented artist as well. This is a drawing that he made for me during an in-studio interview.

Mac appeared on my show, *Radio Misterioso* twice. Once in May of 2006 along with Paul Kimball, and again just a couple of months ago to discuss the details of his upcoming book, from which he read a few passages. Both are truly among my favorite shows.

May he be unbound from time and space and find the answers he sought.

Pamela Stonebrooke: Queen Of The Reptilians
12/30/2008

In early 2001, I was coming out of a divorce, the woman I wanted didn't want me, and I met Pamela Stonebrooke.

For most people, Pamela was way off the map of normal. She openly claimed sexual relationships with reptilian alien entities that she said would materialize in her bedroom late at night. By day, she dressed in stylish outfits culled from vintage clothing stores. (I don't know if that's what the reptiles preferred.) Her personality was outgoing to a fault, and she was a professional jazz singer, with a voice one reviewer described as "an aggressive Billie Holliday chased with Shirley Bassey."

Somehow, we got in touch and started hanging out. Pamela had just ended a long relationship too, and we became friends. We had a lot of fun when she was a guest on my show, Radio Misterioso. I helped Pamela with her computer and scanned artwork and promo portraits for her singing and modeling portfolio. We went out to lunch almost every week and complained about our personal problems to each other. And because I know what you're thinking right now, no, nothing scandalous went on between us.

Pam Stonebrooke in 2001 (Photo by Greg Bishop)

She had scads of articles written about her, which isn't surprising considering her claims. Writers seemed to take her at her word, since she wasn't defensive and possessed an upbeat attitude. Her stories were so weirdly lascivious that the articles practically wrote themselves. Her public persona and claims made her a target of vicious attacks and ridicule, but she always stuck to her story with a smile.

We went to the MUFON national conference in Irvine in July 2001 where she introduced me to abduction researcher John Mack, and we all rolled our eyes listening to Steven Greer's UFO cultist tirade. Mack later wrote the introduction to Pamela's book *Experiencer: A Jazz Singer's True Account of Extraterrestrial Contact*, which was never published, but which was available online for a time.

For most of 2001 and part of '02, I worked on a show called *The Conspiracy Zone*, which ran on TNN for two seasons. My job was to suggest show topics, guests and talking points. Pamela was a natural and made a great impression on the whole staff, even though I don't think that anyone believed a word of her story. They didn't care as long as she made good television, which she did.

I accepted her accounts of dalliances with lizard aliens for the same reason that I believe at least some of the old-time contactees. They possibly had encounters, which they shoehorned into visits with friendly space people. If anyone was standing in Pamela's room late at night, I doubt that they would have seen anything unusual, but what was going on in her psyche was real enough, at least part of the time. Whether it came from outside her mind or not, or was a combination thereof is of course debatable. I told her about my agnostic stance, but it didn't bother her at all.

Her former site at intergalacticdiva.com has been taken over by some sort of Japanese cosmetics company.

Recently, I heard that she was undergoing treatment for cancer or some other life-threatening illness. If she or someone that knows her reads this, I'd like to know how she's doing. [She is still singing jazz music and has apparently taken a stage name as of October, 2015 – G.B.]

Remembering Karla Turner
3/25/2008

The 1994 MUFON convention featured one speaker whose book I had read and with whom I wanted to speak. Fortunately, I had an excuse for an interview because of a 'zine I was publishing at the time.

The researcher was female, a rarity in the UFO field. She had written two books on the abduction scenario, ***Into The Fringe***, and ***Taken***, which impressed me as different views on the subject than were making the rounds at the time. There was little discussion of breeding programs or alien takeover of our genetic material. Instead, she examined what the

phenomenon meant to the individuals involved, on a personal as well as a symbolic level.

It was with a little nervousness that I introduced myself to Karla Turner. She turned out to be a polite, charming, and intelligent person, although I don't know why I expected otherwise. Perhaps it was the forthright tone in her writing, which conveyed a strong dedication and no-nonsense attitude.

She agreed to an interview, which we conducted at the hotel in Austin where the convention was held. At this point, I was willing to accept most of the abduction stories as true, at least as many of the witnesses reported them. I still have little doubt that Turner was sincere and honest about her experiences, and those of her husband, who had both been subject to strange visitations for many years. She didn't really care about people who questioned her interests and tended to ignore all but those who could offer useful information in her quest for answers. There is a good lesson in that.

The interview was published, and Turner took me seriously enough to keep up a correspondence for two more years, until her death in 1996. We talked on the phone every month or two, and she suggested people and subjects that I might want to study. Most of them had little or nothing to do with abductions.

Strangely, almost every piece of mail that I received from Turner showed evidence of tampering. Some were simply left open, while others were sealed in plastic with an apology from the US Post Office. I asked her about this, and she began to send envelopes with a piece of tape over the flap, writing "sealed by sender" over it. The tampering stopped. This sort of thing happened with only one other person, and he was a cattle mutilation researcher.

One experience made me wonder about not just Turner herself, but the whole subject of abductions in general. On the night before our interview, I woke up four or five times: at 1:11, 2:22, 3:33, etc. This is the only time this has happened in my life. Turner and others later told me that this was a little-known experience of many who had claimed anomalous interludes with the UFO phenomenon. My host in Austin, Wes Nations, told me that his neighbors had seen people in khaki outfits looking around his home the day after I left, and that a fire had broken out soon after they disappeared. It did little damage, and may have been a coincidence, but made all of us wonder just what it was that Karla Turner uncovered.

Erik Beckjord Has Left The Building
8/22/2008

Jon Erik Beckjord, paranormal, UFO, and Bigfoot investigator, died two months ago today in San Francisco at age 69 from prostate cancer. He was one of the stranger people I have met, and I remember his harmless antics and tireless research with some nostalgia.

In the late 1980s, I used to go to meetings at the home of a New World Order-type named Gary Schultz in Santa Monica. Beckjord would attend occasionally. On one fateful day, he brought a few UFO videos from area 51, and stayed late to show them to Schultz. Somehow, I weaseled my way into the showing, and watched with a quiet skepticism while Beckjord and Schultz stopped the tape continuously to go over details which I couldn't see. One segment of lights flying like a swarm of insects over the southern end of Nellis Air Force Base did impress me however.

After Beckjord left I discovered that I couldn't find my car keys. A phone call to him revealed that he had taken them for some reason, and I had to go to his Malibu home with a friend to pick them up. He didn't explain why he took the keys, and he didn't invite us in, but told me to pick them up from his roadside mailbox.

On another occasion, I met Beckjord by chance in a Malibu supermarket. He opened his ever-present briefcase and pulled out pictures someone had taken in northern California which he said contained images of bug-eyed aliens. I couldn't see what he was talking about, but Beckjord seemed convinced.

For a few years, before he moved up north, he had a Bigfoot and UFO museum at another home in Venice Beach. Exhibits consisted of folders full of photographs and papers propped against the walls in a couple of rooms. Apparently he opened a more sophisticated version of this homespun project in San Francisco when he moved there in 1996.

I have no idea where he got the money to live in Malibu or make trips to England to investigate crop circles and the Loch Ness Monster, as well as other places around the U.S. Jim Moseley, in his book *Shockingly Close To The Truth*, says that Beckjord was at work on a book called *Sex and the Supernatural Sasquatch*. I'd sure like to see the manuscript for that.

Howard Menger Passes
3/02/2009

Famed UFO contactee Howard Menger died at his home in Vero Beach Florida on February 25th, 8 days after his 87th birthday. He is survived by Connie Menger, his wife of over 50 years, four children, (two by a former marriage) and many grandchildren.

At the age of 19, Menger enlisted in the Army and saw service in the Pacific during WWII in a flamethrower unit flushing the Japanese out of caves and other hideouts. He was wounded and received the Purple Heart. Retuning to his native New Jersey in 1946, Menger started a sign painting business and a family.

This changed in 1956, when he appeared on the Long John Nebel radio show, along with contactee George Van Tassel. He talked about contacts with space brothers (and more specifically -sisters) who appeared to him beginning when he was ten years old. Some of his later published descriptions sound distinctly sexual in nature, although he carefully couched them in language that could be construed as platonic.

He also started taking pictures of the space people and their ships, although most who saw the photos say that they are quite indistinct. On August 4th of 1956, Menger said he was invited on board one of the flying saucers. The next month he said that the space people took him for a joyride where he saw alien civilizations on other planets and structures on the Moon.

Later that year, an attractive young woman named Connie Weber appeared at one of Menger's gatherings. He thought that she was the reincarnation of a blond spacewoman that he had known (in the biblical sense) in a previous life on Venus. He soon left his first wife and family to begin a new life of lectures and touring on the Contactee circuit. Many investigators visited the Menger home and interviewed witnesses whose stories varied with the telling or did not match each other.

From Outer Space To You, Menger's 1959 book entry into the contactee fray, made him a regular at Van Tassel's annual Spacecraft Conventions in Southern California. Connie wrote a book entitled *My Saturnian Lover* about her previous interplanetary relationship with Menger.

In 1960, Menger appeared on a TV show with Nebel and basically recanted his entire story. He later said that he was involved in some sort of Army test of public reaction to possible alien contact. Fortean writer Ivan Sanderson arrived at the Menger residence in the late 1950s and claimed that Menger got very angry with him when Sanderson discovered some equipment and crates in a storage area with "U. S. Army" stenciled on them. (My source for this obscure story was the late Dr. Mario Pazzaglini.)

After this, Menger retired from the public eye and worked on electronic devices he said were designed to harness free energy and allow mankind to build their own flying saucers. He received no widespread publicity for these inventions. Jim Moseley recalled that Menger attended a UFO convention in the 1970s and "blew out all the fuses in the hotel" with one of his contraptions.

Despite the claims and controversy, Howard and Connie Menger seemed to be genuinely in love with each other and apparently raised a reasonably happy family. If nothing else, Menger will be remembered as a unique personality who tried to leave a positive message as his legacy.

The Alien Art of David Huggins
4/28/2008

Some abductees write books and articles, go on the lecture circuit and appear on TV as a way to cope with their experiences (and sometimes to get attention of course) but David Huggins chooses to express himself in the medium of oil painting. I first heard of Huggins in the early-1990s, strangely enough through a notice in Jim Moseley's ***Saucer Smear*** newsletter. As you might expect, Moseley treated the subject in a humorous way, while still respecting some possible reality behind Huggins' encounters.

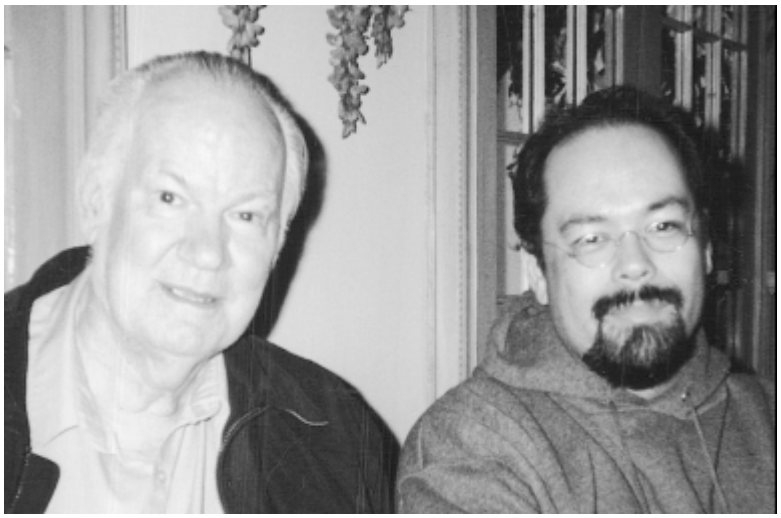
Huggins' paintings run the gamut from pastoral scenes of aliens from childhood in his native Georgia to depictions of a sort of chorus line of female extraterrestrials with whom he says he's fathered many hybrid children.

In August of 1997, Huggins was a guest on the Leeza Gibbons talk show. Before the program, he was invited to take a lie detector test, which apparently came back "inconclusive," but when the cameras started rolling,

the producers decided to report that Huggins had failed the test. By his own choice, that incident ended Huggins' career in the spotlight.

I choose to believe that Huggins is sincere, however his story appears to most people. The fact that his paintings are so far off the beaten path of what most people consider "art" is a plus.

John Keel 1930-2009
7/04/2009



Visiting John Keel in 2001. (Photo by Skylaire Alfvegren)

John Keel, journalist, author, fortean, and originator of some of the most unique theories on UFOs and the paranormal, died on July 3rd in New York City. His influence on generations of researchers is probably immeasurable.

Born Alva John Kiehle on March 25, 1930, Keel began writing at an early age. He was producing a column in the local newspaper in Perry, New York by age 14, and moved to New York City at 17 to pursue a career as an author and adventurer. He was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1951 and worked for the Armed Forces Radio Network, where he once broadcast a program from inside the Great Pyramid at Giza.

After his tour of duty was over, Keel set out on a trip through the middle east to visit fakirs, magicians and occultists and wrote his first book about the experience, *Jadoo*, published in 1957. *Fate* magazine gave Keel

an early interest in the UFO enigma, and together with Ivan Sanderson, they began to write a book on the subject in the mid-1960s. They quickly found that their views were incompatible, and Keel began research into what would later become seminal books such as *The Eighth Tower* and *UFOs, Operation Trojan Horse*.

Keel first challenged the extraterrestrial hypothesis with his idea of the "superspectrum," which theorized that UFOs were controlled by intelligences that moved freely between wavelengths of the electromagnetic spectrum, appearing and disappearing from the infrared and the ultraviolet. Building on the ideas of little-known researchers like Meade Layne and Trevor Constable, he also proposed the theory (and provided ample evidence for this) that UFO entities were not from other planets, but were most likely native intelligences that had been involved with mankind throughout history and prehistory, and perhaps did not have our best interests in mind. These ideas were heresy to the ufological partyline at the time, and continue to be, which is a testament to their originality and implications.

In 1975, Keel rocked the paranormal community with the publication of *The Mothman Prophecies*, which was his take on the strange events leading up to the Silver Bridge disaster in Point Pleasant, West Virginia on December 15, 1967. In 1966, Keel began investigating reports of a frightening creature in the area around the town. Dubbed "Mothman," the entity appeared as a headless human form sporting large wings and glowing red "eyes" in the chest area. Mothman did not fly like any known bird, bat or insect, but swooped down on unsuspecting motorists and teenagers, and took off from the ground vertically without moving its "wings" before keeping pace with fleeing cars and disappearing.

Keel documented other weird goings-on in Point Pleasant for nearly two years, including poltergeist phenomena, strange visions, doppelgangers of Keel himself and a scary character who called himself Indrid Cold. Critics claimed that he took storytelling liberties in *The Mothman Prophecies*, changing events and timelines to suit his narrative, but the essential message of the book still rings true. As Keel stated in the text, "Once you have established a belief, the phenomenon adjusts its manifestations to support that belief and thereby escalate it." This hypothesis has been tested numerous times since in other UFO "flap" areas,

(such as events around the Dulce, New Mexico area in the late 1970s and the more recent Stephenville case) and continues to hold its own.

In the late 1980s, Keel founded the New York Fortean Society and continued to write and lecture periodically well into the late 1990s.

In 1999, I called Keel and asked for a quote for the release of a collection of articles from *The Excluded Middle*, my old magazine. He politely refused a few times, but finally offered "The truth is out there, but it's nowhere in this book. Buy mine instead." The quote went on the back cover o*f Wake Up Down There!: The Excluded Middle Collection* when it was published the next year. The title of that book is based on a strange phone conversation related by Keel in *Mothman Prophecies*.

In 2000, I finally visited Keel in New York and we had lunch before visiting the Museum of Natural History and a store that sold all manner of bones and skeletons. His comments on the hubris of some scientists and paranormal researchers were cantankerous but delivered with a smile, and he signed my copy of his first book, *Jadoo*. We met again in NYC the next year.

John A Keel will be sorely missed.

P.S. In some sort of cosmic trickster way, Keel may have gotten a final laugh as my computer locked up and apparently died as I was writing this obituary. After a couple of tries, it miraculously resurrected itself. Long live Keel!

Gabe Valdez Passes
8/08/2011

With Gabe in Albuquerque, 2009. (Photo by Nick Redfern)

Gabe Valdez, an honored New Mexico State Police Officer as well as good friend of mine, was found dead in his Albuquerque home today. He had apparently passed away in his sleep. Norio Hayakawa called to tell me this sad news.

We met in 2003 when I was working on *Project Beta*. Bill Moore got us in touch and we met at a restaurant in Albuquerque. He took me on a few long-distance errands for his work, and we talked at length about his involvement with the rash of cattle mutilation incidents around Dulce, New Mexico in the late 1970s and early ’80s, as well as his friendship with Paul Bennewitz, the main subject of the book. The next day, he presented me with a large box of his files and left me alone with them for about three hours while he worked elsewhere. It was an incredible treasure trove of facts and images, many of which ended up in the published book.

He was one of the first law enforcement personnel to deal with the cattle mutilation enigma firsthand, and knew far more about the events and issues surrounding this problem than anyone else I’ve ever met. He was well-respected in the Dulce and surrounding Jicarilla Apache community for his dedication to public safety and friendship with many of the locals. Earlier this year, he offered to take me into the backcountry near the town and show me evidence of underground facilities.

In 2000, he was running a study on unexplained animal deaths for Robert Bigelow’s National Institute of Discovery Science. He later told me that he had confirmed a non-alien explanation for the cattle mutilation phenomenon.

In the years since *Project Beta* was released, Gabe kept me up to date on developments in Dulce and unexplained animal mutilations. He and his wife Margie also welcomed me warmly whenever I was in New Mexico. What many in the UFO arena may not know is that he was awarded citations and medals for his police work, and has two sons in public service, one who has served multiple tours of duty in the middle east in the armed forces, and the other who has followed his father's legacy as an officer in the state police. [His son Greg has since written an excellent book based on his late father's files entitled *Dulee Base: The Truth and Evidence From the Case Files of Gabe Valdez*. – G.B. 2015.]

What I will remember most about Gabe was his warm personality, sharp intelligence, and his habit of putting a hand on my shoulder and saying "bueno" whenever we parted company.

Remembering Gray Barker
07/14/08

Gray Barker was one of the most colorful figures in the history of the UFO subject. He was the author at least two landmark books: *Flying Saucers and the Three Men*, which popularized the Men In Black stories of ufologist Albert Bender and *The Silver Bridge*, which was his take on the Mothman scare of the mid-1960s. Most if not all of his audience took his writing seriously, and Barker was a gifted reporter, but he often took liberties with the facts for the entertainment of his readers.

In 1994, I interviewed Jim Moseley for *The Excluded Middle***.**
He recalled his best friend Barker as someone who:

> …had wonderful sense of humor, and a sense of wonderment (which is a good word for him) about the UFO subject. He stopped being a "believer" very early on, but kept the sense of wonderment. What he got out of it was entertainment for himself, and the audience he wrote for. He thought of himself as an entertainer, not as a scientist or a person dealing in facts. There were "New Age" types long before there was a UFO field, and he knew this audience and what they wanted to hear, so he wrote books and published them as a book business. He also had a

theater that he owned and operated, and he started out as a booking agent for films at theaters in the area. So, he was always in the entertainment field and thought of himself as an entertainer. He thought I was too serious, because I believed some of it, and still do, but he didn't believe any of it.

His last book was *Men In Black: The Secret Terror Among Us*, which I read in 1984. Inside the back cover was an address and phone number. When I finally got up the gumption to call, a woman who turned out to be his mother answered and told me that he had died the month before. It was really a shock and a disappointment. I had similar luck with flying saucer contactee Orfeo Angelucci, who passed away a month before I finally learned that he lived not 10 miles from my apartment.

In 1995, my friend Ralph Coon directed a documentary on Barker, called *Whispers From Space*. The film featured interviews with Barker's friends and acquaintances from Clarksburg, West Virginia, his hometown, as well as Moseley. The last scene in the film is a tape recorder sitting next to Barker's tombstone. It's Barker speaking to a UFO convention audience about his fascination and wonder with the subject, and it's strangely poignant.

During our interview, Moseley pulled a sheet from a stack of papers and read me one of Gray Barker's unpublished poems, which summed up Barker's attitude, at least during one of his many cynical periods:

UFO is a bucket of shit
Its followers: perverts, monomaniacs, dipsomaniacs
Artists of the fast buck
True believers, objective believers, new age believers
Keyhoe believers
Shushed by the three men
Or masturbated by space men
UFO is a bucket of shit
The Air Force investigated UFOs
And issued a report
Couched in polite language
Which translated, means:
"UFO is a bucket of shit"

Meade Layne is a bucket of shit
Lex Mebane is a bucket of shit
James W. Moseley is a bucket of shit
Richard Ogden is a bucket of shit
Ray Palmer is a bucket of shit
And I sit here writing
While the shit drips down my face
In great rivulets

UFO Videos and the People Behind Them
06/05/07

In the last couple of decades, hundreds of video clips of suspected UFOs have come to light. Almost all of them are most likely hoaxes or misidentifications of natural or man-made objects. The stories behind them are almost always interesting, or hilarious.

One that has been floating around the interwebs supposedly shows the crash of a UFO at or near the White Sands Missile Range in southern New Mexico, circa 1997. The footage was "surfaced" by a guy named Ted Loman, who is a story in himself.

In 1973, Loman was convinced that a flying saucer was going to pick him up on a mountaintop in Baja California and take him back to his home planet. He never made it to the rendezvous, but in 1989, Loman had a serious accident while working with melted silver and lost his left eye. He stayed at his parents' Idaho home while recuperating and his father read UFO books to him.

By 1997, he had moved to Tucson, Arizona and was producing a cable access program called UFOAZ Talks. His 15 minutes of fame arrived as the result of an interview he conducted with representatives of the Heaven's Gate group, just a few months before they all did away with themselves. After a run of 5 years, and a couple of name changes, the show went off the air. Loman returned to Idaho to work on a crash-retrieval documentary called *It Fell From The Sky*. The White Sands video was apparently supposed to open the film with a bang, as it were.

When asked about the source of the video, Loman is apparently evasive and has hinted that he received it from Mexican UFO media maven Jaime

Maussan–hardly a monument of integrity himself. Some observers like Peter Gersten, have commented that the clip was probably computer-generated. This interview with Loman doesn't impress me with anything in particular, but perhaps he simply wants to be well-liked, like the character (also named Loman) in Arthur Miller's famous play, *Death Of A Salesman*.

The video looks to me like a rocket test gone awry. The glowing "disc' shape may be some sort of exhaust. What do you think?

Woody Derenberger, Hamburgers, and Indrid Cold
12/16/08

One of my favorite UFO contactee stories has got to be the one about Woodrow Derenberger and his experiences with a space brother named Indrid Cold from the planet Lanulos, which took place in a rural area of West Virginia in 1958. Derenberger's story was made famous by author John Keel after he was written up in Keel's *The Mothman Prophecies*.

A post on Derenberger at the Church Of Ufology site is so full of symbolic import that I almost can't stand it:

> "They aren't making contact only around here," Mrs. Derenberger told me. "They are doing this all over the country. But they find the people in West Virginia more receptive."
>
> "It was at that second meeting, the night of November 4, that Cold told me about himself" said Woody. "He's from a planet called 'Lanulos,' located near the galaxy 'Genemedes.' They have woods, streams, fields, oceans, the same as we do. They've taken samples of our vegetation, our animals. Ours are much like theirs. Cold is married, his wife is named Kimi and he had two sons at that time. Has three children, now, one was born right around Christmas time, a little girl."
>
> "They're Time Travelers," Mrs. Derenberger injected.
>
> "That's right," Woody said. "In the fourth dimension. One reason they can't stay here too long at a time is because they get younger down here instead of older. Their life span is 125 - 175

> years, but if they stayed here too long I think they'd go back in years and possibly forget how to manipulate their craft."

Surprisingly, Mrs. Derenberger seemed to support her husband's story, in stark contrast to many contactees and UFO witnesses, who's spouses generally seemed to freak out and occasionally leave when confronted with stories that made them the butt of ridicule.

Putting this up against Keel's portrayal of Cold as a malevolent presence, somehow connected to the Mothman phenomenon and Keel himself I am struck by the strange good/evil dichotomy that arises. There is still argument as to whether Keel experienced any actual torment at the hands of Cold, or if he simply borrowed the tale for adaptation to his own story.

Derenberger's own tome on his experiences (actually written by a man named Harold Hubbard) is titled *Visitors From The Planet Lanulos*, and is available from various booksellers at prices ranging from $170 to $180. I have never read it, but I'd like to.

A more recent Lanulos contactee claimant named Tom Steele (which great name for a comic book character) spoke to a Cleveland UFO group in 2006:

> Tom claims to have been "taken" by beings from Lanulos to the moon and many different planets. In 1973 or 1974 Ray Steele, his grandfather, took him to a UFORD meeting in Sebring, Ohio to learn about other worlds. It was after that meeting, Tom was visited by Billie Jo, a young female alien who looked exactly like his childhood sweetheart and was asked if he would like to go for a ride. In a matter of seconds, Tom was taken to the moon where he was able to view earth.
>
> The peaceful and loving inhabitants of Lanulos look like us, and eat food like us. The food even tastes better, "like Burger Chef."

If Steele's right, we're going to have to get the Burger Chef people to get back in business to offer Derenburgers and Indrid Cold drinks.

4 - Doomed To Repeat It: Historical Perspectives

Old-line UFO researchers and fans regard the history of the phenomenon as sacred ground and in fact look down on those who are not conversant with the most famous cases. (Few however, are aware of the world's first UFO crash, described in this chapter and illustrated above.) Although many seem to be content with rote repetition (as research and theorizing continue along a narrow path) it is sometimes valuable to revisit and rethink some incidents and phenomena in light of more recent revelations and discoveries. New or overlooked information and more importantly, ideas about how humans perceive and remember can change our perspective and give us new insights, plus, it's fun to read about.

The 20 Most Important Dates In Ufology
12/30/2006

Everyone likes lists. Here's my 20 most important dates, or perhaps years, in the history of UFOs. These were chosen with three criteria in mind: 1) The effect on Ufology in general 2) The effect these events have on the perception of the phenomenon and 3) The effect on public awareness. Listed in chronological order.

1) 1897 – The Great Airship Mystery

What were people seeing in the skies back then? Sure, a lot of the stories were probably cooked up by bored newspaper editors, but there is a core of sightings that were probably "real." What is most interesting about this is that the flying machines were described as something just ahead of the technology of the time. What I have always thought is that witnesses took a weird experience and forced it into something that they could understand in terms of their period. Ghost hunter Richard Senate recently told me that he looked into the subject and decided that it was possible but not very probable that there indeed could have been a secret group of inventors at the time, doing just what was reported. Bill Moore and others have delved into the history of a shadowy group of just this type that called itself "The Sonora Aero Club." No one has been able to verify its existence. Researcher Walter Bosley claims that he has.

2) June 24, 1947 – Kenneth Arnold Sighting

Do I have to rehash this one? Pilot saw nine shiny, chevron-shaped objects over Mount Rainier. Acknowledged to be the incident that gave birth to our hobby.

3) July 2-8, 1947 – Roswell Incident

I am NOT going to rehash this!

4) September 24, 1947 – Possible creation of MJ-12

According to the highly disputed (and mostly discredited) "Eisenhower Briefing Document," MJ-12 was created by President Truman, possibly because of the fallout from Roswell. While we have been kicking this issue back and forth for years, there do remain numerous references in leaked documents and unconfirmable personal recollections to some sort of working group at the highest levels to deal with the UFO question. Since we know about MJ-12, it's probably not that one. The announcement of the

Eisenhower document at the 1987 National UFO Conference in Burbank, California breathed new life into Ufology. Even your uninterested friends have heard of this group.

5) September, 1949 – Project Sign Report

Usually referred to by its actual name "Estimate of the Situation," the first conclusion reached by a panel of scientists and U.S. Air Force personnel was that the UFOs were "of extraterrestrial origin." Either looking far ahead to the ETH debate, or the more likely the fact that he couldn't handle the idea, General Hoyt Vandenburg rejected the findings as having no conclusive proof. All copies of the report were ordered destroyed. Some may have survived well into the 1960s and possibly beyond, but none have ever surfaced publicly, leaving the Project Sign report in the same basket with the UFOs themselves. Ufologists have crowed over this one ever since author/ researcher Ed Ruppelt revealed its existence.

6) July-August, 1952 – UFOs Over Washington, D.C.

The darting lights came in three waves; the first on July 19-20, the second from the 26-27, and the third from August 2-3. The lights flew over the Capitol, the White House, and even near Air Force bases in the area. (One of them, Bolling AFB, later became the Air Force's clandestine intelligence clearing house for UFO reports.) The targets were confirmed by military and civilian radar operators and became a huge embarrassment until AF Intelligence Chief Major General John Samford called a press conference to explain that the sightings were due to temperature inversions. Although this situation is likely, but nearly impossible, the inversion explanation is still trotted out occasionally.

7) November 20, 1952 – George Adamski meets Orthon

George picked a good year to have his CE3K. 1952 was the biggest "flap" year on record. Although it is generally believed that Adamski made the whole thing up, this "event" was the genesis of the Contactee movement, which has delighted the public and dogged "serious" Ufology ever since.

8) 1952-53 – Robertson Panel

Wanting to get in on the UFO action, the CIA ordered its own Estimate Of The Situation with an ad-hoc committee (including J. Allen Hynek) who met for a total of 12 hours before submitting its report. They said that 90% of sightings were misidentifications, and the remaining cases could be explained if given enough time. They further suggested that the Air Force should begin a debunking campaign to keep a check on public hysteria in case the Russkies decided to use the panic for psy-war purposes or to mask an invasion or any other military action. Notice that they were more concerned with national security than keeping the "real" extraterrestrials secret. They didn't even think that aliens existed.

9) September 19, 1961 – Hill Abduction

On a drive home from Montreal, Barney and Betty Hill sighted a strange light in the sky near Lancaster, New Hampshire. After hearing a "beeping" sound, they felt dizzy and disoriented, but continued the rest of their trip. Upon arriving at home in Portsmouth, they found that the trip had taken almost 2 hours longer than it should have. After months of lost sleep, ulcers, and unrelenting nightmares, they sought help from a Boston psychologist. What was revealed under hypnosis was to affect the Hills and the entire abduction phenomenon forever.

10) April 24, 1964 – Lonnie Zamora Sighting

Seeing something fly over the road and into a nearby arroyo near Socorro, New Mexico, Police Officer Lonnie Zamora drove up to investigate. What he saw that day was to become one of the best UFO sightings on record. As he approached over a rise, he saw an egg-shaped craft about the size of a car sitting on the ground on "girder-like" legs about 150 yards away. Two humanoid figures in white coveralls stood next to the object. When they saw him, one of them jumped as if startled and the two figures went around behind the object. It lifted off with a roar and a blue flame and was lost from sight in seconds. Project Bluebook and J. Allen Hynek were on the scene within 24 hours and proclaimed the case truly unexplained.

11) March, 1966 – "Swamp Gas" Incident

At 10:30 on the night of March 21, students in the women's dormitory of Hillsdale College in Dexter, Michigan called the Civil Defense office

with a report of something with red green and white pulsating lights that had flown over their building. At about 11PM, they called back to report that the object had returned and had settled into a hollow in a wooded area about ½ mile east of the dormitory. The place was maintained as a park by the College. Police were called and dispatched to the area to check things out. Seeing a few lights which they could not get close enough to investigate, they returned to the dorm and observed orange and white lights flashing near where they had been looking. The reporting officer watched as the lights ascended to about 150 feet and back down to the ground several times. He was able to observe a convex surface on the object. At about 4:30 AM, the lights disappeared and nothing more was seen. Bluebook sent Dr. J. Allen Hynek out to investigate. After consulting with witnesses and the policemen who had seen the object, and under pressure from the Air Force to come up with any sort of explanation, he told reporters that the phenomenon could have been due to luminous methane gasses coming from a nearby swampy area. The press picked up on this as the Air Force's official explanation and roundly criticized and ridiculed Hynek for it. The incident began to turn the tide of public opinion against the official policy of debunking reports.

12) September, 1967 – Snippy the horse mutilation
From *Wikipedia*:

> On September 7th, Agnes King and her son Harry noted that Lady, a three-year-old horse, had not returned to the ranch at the usual time for her water. This was unusual, given the heat and the arid conditions. Harry found Lady on the 9th. Her head and neck had been skinned and defleshed, the bones were white and clean. To King, the cuts on Lady seemed to have been very precise. There was no blood at the scene, according to Harry, and there was a strong medicinal odor in the air. The next day, Harry and Agnes returned to the scene with her brother and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Berle Lewis. They found a lump of skin and horseflesh; when Mrs. Lewis touched it, the flesh oozed a greenish fluid which burned her hand. They also reported the discovery of fifteen "tapering, circular exhaust marks punched into the ground" over an

area of some 5000 square yards. The medicinal odor had weakened somewhat, but was still present.

Cattle mutilations would not become a major part of Ufology until the late 1970s, when a wave of incidents swept through the Western states.

13) November, 1968 – Condon Project Report

In 1966, the Air Force ordered a survey of UFO reports to determine once and for all the merit of the phenomenon. Physicist Edward U. Condon was picked to head the project. Condon sent a memo around to committee members early in the study suggesting that they would find little evidence for any "real" UFOs. This angered many members, some of whom quit, and a few who issued their own assessments after the report was released. The conclusion of the study was that UFOs represented misidentification and hoaxes only. This was what the Air Force wanted to hear, and the press and public were satisfied that an unbiased scientific report had finally put the matter to rest. The UFOs didn't see it that way, and blithely continued to befuddle and fascinate everyone despite the infallibility of science.

14) 1969 – Project Bluebook closed down

From 1952 to 1969, the U.S. Air Force conducted a public survey of UFO reports, mainly to determine if the sightings were a threat to national security, but also to calm public fears about unknowns and where they might be coming from. The mere fact that the government took any public interest in the subject brought UFOs further into the limelight. Bluebook scientist J. Allen Hynek said that his job was to explain the sensational stories that got too much publicity.

15) 1977 – *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*

The film that bought UFOs back to public attention and revitalized Ufology, for better or worse. J. Allen Hynek made an appearance and Jacques Vallée was played by Francois Truffaut. It certainly excited me when I was a kid and reading UFO books like a fiend.

16) 1979 – Paul Bennewitz begins filming strange lights

Yes, I know, I'm biased on this, but the fallout from the Bennewitz incident stained Ufology well into the 1990s, and is in a sense still with us

today. When the Air Force found that Bennewitz was looking in on some of their most secret projects, the set up a plan to fill him with so much disinformation that he was eventually committed to a mental institution by his family. The stories he was fed were picked up on and encouraged by the Air Force and other agencies with a new generation of hobbyists who spread the horror stories to a willing audience. Legends of underground bases, deals with alien races, and perhaps even MJ-12 all stemmed from the Bennewitz operation.

17) December 29, 1980 – Cash-Landrum Incident

Driving back from dinner in west Texas, Betty Cash, Vickie Landrum and Landrum's grandson Colby were startled to see a diamond-shaped craft hovering over the trees near the road. As they slowed down to take a look, the object floated over the blacktop, spewing flames from the bottom. Cash stopped the car and stepped outside to get a better look. The heat from the exhaust was so intense that she had to use a leather jacket to open the car door when she tried to flee back inside. Weeks later, the impressions of Vickie Landrum's hands were still visible on the dashboard. As they watched, 23 army-type helicopters came into view and appeared to "shepherd" the object away until it seemed to gain altitude and the roaring flame stopped. In the weeks that followed, the witnesses, particularly Cash, began to show signs of radiation poisoning.

Although they were secretly offered a deal by the Air Force to drop a lawsuit, they declined based on advice by their lawyer, Peter Gersten. The case was finally dismissed, the cited reason being that the witnesses could not prove that the U.S. military flew any of the helicopters described, and that the government did not have any diamond-shaped aircraft. Based on open-source information, the government has experimented with nuclear-powered aircraft, and one undocumented source has claimed that the craft was a hybrid nuclear/antigravity-type platform. As usual, many clues, but no conclusion. In short-a perfect setup for advanced technology masquerading as a UFO.

18) 1987 – *Intruders* and *Communion* published

In a one-two punch, these two books signaled the start of the abduction phenomenon as the star attraction of Ufology, for better or worse.

19) 1989 – Robert Lazar and Area 51 stories begin

Beginning in 1988, listeners to the Billy Goodman radio show began hearing stories of a secret government UFO testing area in the rocky wastes of southern Nevada. Soon, the anonymous source of these tales emerged in the person of physicist Robert Lazar. After an in-depth investigation by Las Vegas TV reporter George Knapp, the story spread like wildfire through the UFO community.

20) July 2, 1989 – Bill Moore comes clean

Amid growing suspicion that Moore was a government agent, Moore announced, in a dramatic presentation at the annual MUFON conference, that he had indeed cooperated with elements of U.S. Intelligence in a deal to get official documents on UFOs released. Many were released or shown to Moore, but as he concluded years later, most of them were full of red herrings and disinformation. Although he told just about everything he dared that night, most who saw or heard about the speech chose to vilify him, rather than take the information for what it was–a warning not to confuse the reality or accuracy of the message with the messenger. In other words, don't believe an inside source just because it's an inside source. It was the end of innocence in Ufology.

Those Damned Cattle Mutilations
2/17/2007

When we first encounter the cattle mutilation phenomenon, it seems very hard to digest mentally. At that point, predisposition takes over: Believers think it's aliens doing genetic experiments, fundamentalist skeptics counter that it's merely predators and scavengers who bring down livestock, drain their blood, and in some cases leave them out in back of the farmhouse, mere feet from sleeping ranchers. Both scenarios seem equally ridiculous.

Most agree that the "Kenneth Arnold" event for mutilations was the "Snippy the Horse" case of September 8th, 1967. (Chris O'Brien, author of *The Mysterious Valley*, talked with one of the original witnesses, Harry King, who reported that the horse was in fact named "Snippy," contrary to popular belief that the animal's name was "Lady.") King and his mother

noted that Snippy failed to return to a water trough as usual, and two days later found the animal dead on a small mesa.

Flesh had been removed from the head and neck, there was no blood at the scene, and King said that there was a strange medicinal odor in the air. When Agnes King touched a piece of the carcass, a greenish fluid oozed out, and seemed to contain some chemical that burned her skin. Residents in the area reported UFO-like activity in the skies before and after the event.

In the mid-1970s, the problem became so widespread in New Mexico that Senator Harrison Schmitt convened a symposium at the Albuquerque Public Library. In April of 1979, he invited ranchers, researchers, and law enforcement officials to gather and talk about the problem, which had up to that time cost the cattle industry in the neighborhood of $1 million. Few conclusions were reached, and one researcher from Colorado said that "The only sense of mutilations is that they make no sense at all."

The Justice Department was called in to investigate, and hired retired FBI agent Kenneth Rommel to head "Operation Animal Mutilation." His report, running 297 pages, was released in 1980. It concluded that the majority of the mutilations were easily accounted for as natural deaths and predator activity, with a small percentage that could not be explained adequately with the resources available. Rommel reportedly told researcher Linda Howe that she was barking up the wrong tree with her alien intervention theory, and that the phenomenon was due solely to natural causes.

With the exception of one or two reports (one where a rancher claimed to observe two alien creatures carrying a dead calf, and the other reported by an abductee under hypnosis) I know of no cases where aliens have been observed in contact with livestock. If we throw out the UFO explanation, this leaves us few options available to account for the observed anomalies in cattle mutilations.

Howe once told me that the aliens want to make it look like humans are doing this to cover their own tracks. I do not agree. Some may counter that Howe is a dedicated field researcher and I have no expertise in this area. They are right. My ideas are based on in-depth conversations with other researchers who have many years of hands-on experience with livestock mutilations.

Retired New Mexico State Police Officer Gabe Valdez was involved in the investigation of mutilations from the "ground floor." He was the first official on the scene in countless incidents in the Dulce, NM area from the late 1970s to the late '80s. He has shown me firsthand evidence collected in the field, including something resembling radar chaff, which was spread around a field at a mutilation scene–some of the pieces were actually stuffed in the animal's mouth. (These were later identified as probable pieces of an electronic capacitor.) He also found a gas mask and surgical instruments at other sites. In 2000, Valdez was hired by the National Institute For Discovery Science to contribute to its report on the phenomenon. He concluded that the cattle may be part of a covert experiment to track diseases in livestock. Independent researcher Ted Oliphant, who spent a few years in law enforcement in another mutilation hotspot–Fyffe, Alabama–came to basically the same conclusion after years of study. Chris O'Brien, while not wedded to the theory, remarks that it would account for much of the observed evidence during his years in southern Colorado.

Under this theory, the proximity of UFO sightings to mutilation outbreaks may be an attempt by whatever human agencies are involved to capitalize on the alien connection. It may also be the result of experimental or secret aircraft used in the operations. Researcher Peter Jordan concluded as much in a remote viewing study he conducted in the late 1970s where a majority of his sensitives perceived not alien craft, but light helicopters unloaded from trucks and personnel in hazmat suits. Photographs of mutilations were given to the viewers in sealed envelopes.

Admittedly, this last example is too much for some to bear, but the possibility of a pathogen which was released accidentally sometime in the mid-1970s by agencies unknown, and attempts to study and control it before the fact becomes public seems to fit the evidence just as well or better than some kind of alien agenda. Diseases such as Bovine Spongiform Encephelopathy (or "mad cow") and Cruzfelt-Jakob which affect not only domestic animals, but wildlife and humans as well is almost too frightening to consider, especially if the disease was a biowarfare experiment gone awry.

This theory does not account for all anomalies observed in mutilations, but it does explain many of them, and provides an excellent model for motives. Like many theories on anomalous subjects, the case is not airtight.

Mysterious cases of missing organs with no visible incisions to remove them is one example that comes to mind. If the phenomenon is UFO-related though, it seems to make little sense. Hyper-intelligent aliens should not require hundreds of tries to get information on bovine physiology. Humans would need this database, and the pubic outcry if the study were made public before a cure was found would be disastrous.

When UFO Prophecy Fails
2/26/2008

One of my favorite books on the UFO subject and contacteeism is the 1956 classic ***When Prophecy Fails***. The story surfaced through a morally questionable (in today's terms) university study of a flying saucer group headed by a woman who channeled what she described as alien intelligences who told her that the world was going to end. The members of the group gathered in the leader's home in Lake City, Minneapolis and waited for the saucers to come and pick them up, which of course, never happened. A couple of the cult members were actually students from the psychology department of the University of Minnesota, who disguised their motives and took detailed notes. The leader, known as "Marion Keech" (a pseudonym) told her followers that the aliens had rewarded the group's faith by saving the planet from destruction. Sounds typical, right?

But as "Emperor" writes at the fascinating *Cabinet of Wonders* site,[1] the case also had Men In Black visits, and an encounter with a small group who tried to convince Keech that she had been in error all along. What were these visitors after? Were they government employees trying to figure out if Keech was a communist agent, or stopping her group before it could get a better foothold?

The quote (in part) from Jacques Vallée's *Dimensions* is illuminating:

> …Mrs. Keech had been visited by strange people. The first incident followed the disclosure of her flood forecast in the local papers. Two men came to her door and asked to talk to her; one of them was a perfectly ordinary human, but his companion was very strange and did not say a single word during the visit. She asked who they were, and the first man replied, "I am of this planet, but

he is not." The point of their discussion, which lasted for half an hour, was that she should not publicize her information beyond what she had already done. "The time is not right now," the man said before leaving with his companion. This encounter had been deadly serious. As a result Mrs. Keech gave up her plans to publish a book about her experiences.

[1] https://web.archive.org/web/20100113111300/http://www.wunderkabinett.co.uk/damndata/index.php?/archives/1287-When-prophecy-fails.html

Heaven's Gate - 10 Years Ago Today
3/22/2007

Someone once said that cults are merely nascent religions without enough followers. UFO contactees and their fans are not usually known for killing themselves en masse, but the flying saucer religion founded by Bonnie Lu Nettles and Marshall Herff Applewhite survived for over twenty years in various guises until thirty-nine remaining stragglers went out with a very loud whimper in northern San Diego County on March 22nd, 1997. It remains the biggest mass-suicide in United States history.

Applewhite was the overachieving son of a Presbyterian minister, and discovered early in life that he possessed a magnetic personality which could make almost anyone accept his ideas. In his late thirties, he was dismissed from his teaching post at an Alabama university for having an affair with a male student. His marriage broke up soon afterwards, and in 1972, he admitted himself to a psychiatric care facility in Houston. While there, he met Bonnie Lu Trousdale Nettles, whose marriage was also on the rocks. Ultimately, the record of Applewhite's psychological ups and downs was to form a sort of road map of the Heaven's Gate saga.

Some time in 1973, they left Houston to hit the road and start harvesting souls. They told prospective followers that they (Applewhite and Nettles) would be persecuted for their beliefs and murdered, but would rise after three days and be taken up on a UFO. The only way to guarantee salvation was to follow "The Two" and leave dreary lives of unsatisfying work, families, and sex. This is sort of appealing (except for the sex part)

and another UFO cult, the Raelians, actually enticed prospective adherents with openly horny recruitment tactics. They still do.

Throughout the 1970s and ‘80s, Applewhite and Nettles changed their earth-bound space alien names whenever inspiration struck. “The Two” first became “Guinea” and “Pig.” It appears that Nettles was saddled with “Pig,” which had to have been at least a little disconcerting. Imagine her relief when the names were changed to “Bo” and “Peep” and finally, “Do” and “Ti” (referring to notes on the musical scale.) In 1985, Do (Nettles) lost a bout with liver cancer, which is not generally considered the proper path for an ascended master to ascend. Applewhite had to explain to the flock that Do had “gone on to the next level to prepare the way.” Still, the membership barely dwindled.

In 1993, the group, now calling themselves Total Overcomers Anonymous, produced a short series of television programs entitled “Beyond Human - The Last Call” which was broadcast on various satellite networks. A few long-lost wanderers returned and some new recruits joined. Though their contributions, as well as a lucrative web-design business, the foundation, which had now changed their name to “Heaven’s Gate,” rented a mansion in the secluded and exclusive Rancho Santa Fe area of San Diego County, and waited.

In late 1996, the world was poised to witness one of the most spectacular celestial events of the late 20th century. A comet, named after co-discoverers Alan Hale and Thomas Bopp would become clearly visible in the northern hemisphere in the summer of the following year. Enter maverick (or publicity-seeking) amateur astronomer Chuck Shramek, who appeared on the Art Bell radio program to announce that he had detected a “companion” object of massive size pacing Hale-Bopp as it made its approach to Earth. Maverick (or publicity-seeking) remote-viewer Courtney Brown and his assistant Prudence Calabrese confirmed that an “alien ship” was following the comet. Bell denied any complicity in the subsequent events, saying he was not responsible for anything people chose to do with the information.

The Heaven’s Gaters thought that Nettles was either riding the mystery object, or at least had sent the comet as a sign to “just do it.” Another interesting fact that seems to have escaped the media and hundreds of post-mortems scattered though cyberspace and elsewhere is that the very name “Bopp” contains the names “Bo” and “Peep” (pp.) This synchronicity must

have sent the cult into paroxysms of religious ecstasy. “Hail BO-PP!” Applewhite’s term for heaven was “Evolutionary Level Above Human” (ELAH), which spelled backwards is of course, HALE.

On March 21st, the shaved-headed residents of 18241 Colina Norte Drive descended on the local Marie Callender’s restaurant for a last supper of iced tea, turkey pot pie and salad, followed by blueberry cheesecake. Between March 22nd and the 24th, 39 people helped each other step into identical crisp new black jumpsuits emblazoned with colorful “Away Team” logo patches. Each then ate a bowl of phenobarbital-laced applesauce, chased with vodka to control any side-effects. Some put plastic bags over their heads as insurance. They had done their homework according to the instructions of the Hemlock Society’s book *Final Exit*. The dying was done in shifts over two days. Applewhite was the last to go, making sure that no one backed out at the last minute.

On March 25th, former member Richard Ford received two copies of a videotape featuring the “last statements” of members, which were to be replayed ad nauseam in the days to follow on countless news shows. Ford entered the house to find 18 women and 21 men lying on freshly laundered sheets in cheap bunk beds, covered with purple shrouds. In a move that took the shoe company months to live down, all were wearing brand new black Nike track shoes. Everyone held their passports clutched in one hand and $5.75 cash in the other. Amongst the Heaven’s Gate “exit crew” was Thomas Nichols, brother of Star Trek actress Nichelle Nichols.

What in the heavens did they need with passports and money? One creepy and remarkable clue is found in a 1907 story entitled *Extract from Captain Stormfield’s Trip to Heaven* by none other than Mark Twain. In this tale, the protagonist leaves for “an extended excursion among the heavenly bodies” on the tail of a comet. Captain Stormfield takes along his passport and $5.75 in cash for the fare.

First edition cover art. (Credit: wikipedia)

A fascinating study of a millennial UFO cult from the 1950s, *When Prophecy Fails*, chronicled the experiences of graduate students from the University of Minnesota who infiltrated a religious study group that centered around a woman known as "Mrs. Keech." Keech channeled messages from aliens that were discussed and interpreted by the members. When the appointed time for salvation from hovering saucers came and went not once, but two times, one of the followers said "We've burned every bridge. I've turned my back on the world. I can't afford to doubt. I have to believe." Many of the surviving members of Applewhite's gang later expressed similar tragic delusions.

Was The "Father Gill" Sighting A Classified Aircraft?
9/05/2008

Many readers may know about the classic Papua, New Guinea sighting of 1959 when an Anglican priest and some native islanders observed a hovering, discoid object and figures who waved in answer to similar gestures from the witnesses.

For those who don't, here's a recap from Australian Ufologist Bill Chalker:

> William B. Gill, an Anglican priest with a mission in Boianai, Papua New Guinea, observed craft-like UFOs — one with Humanoid figures on top — on two consecutive evenings, June 26-27, 1959. About twenty-five natives, including teachers and medical technicians, also observed the phenomena. They "signaled" the humanoids and received an apparent response. This was one of sixty UFO sightings within a few weeks in the New Guinea area**.**

What many may not know is that this event took place about 1200 miles from the United States military installation in the Kwajalein atoll, located in the Marshall Islands, which has been a semi-secret missile and rocket test facility since, coincidentally enough, 1959. Now, 1200 miles may seem like a long way, but in the geography of the immense South Pacific, as well as the distances covered by high-speed aircraft and of course rockets, it's a stone's throw. New Guinea is also the nearest land that isn't a micro-island in that area of the South Pacific (with the possible exception of Guam) which suggests that the object and apparent "crew" may have picked it in case they ran into any serious trouble with their equipment.

If you lend any credence to stories of unconventional aircraft (of the anti- or electro-gravitic type) and rumors about captured technology just after WWII, Gill and his fellow witnesses may have seen some sort of test flight stopover. Why the crew bothered to hover right over a beach in New Guinea in front of scores of witnesses is a question that remains unanswered.

Gill's own account stresses the almost mundane nature of the encounter. There were no high-G or other strange movements made by the object. It apparently hovered over the small church complex and then slowly disappeared into the clouds. (There were two sightings on subsequent evenings.) During the second event, Gill went inside before the craft had left. While some investigators have expressed surprise that anyone would leave in the middle of such an extraordinary sight, Gill and his companions had been looking at the UFO for over four hours just the night before. After returning hand gestures and moving the object in answer to a flashlight, the "crew" had apparently lost interest in the witnesses as well, and repeated attempts to make it land were unsuccessful.

In Gill's own words:

> You must also keep in mind that there was nothing eerie or other-worldly about any of this. It was all so ordinary, as ordinary as a Ford car. It looked a perfectly normal sort of object, an earth made object. I realised, of course, that some people might think of this as a flying saucer but I took it to be some kind of hovercraft the Americans or even the Australians had built.
>
> The figures inside looked perfectly human. In fact, I thought they were human, that if we got them to land we would find the pilots to be ordinary earthmen in military uniforms and we would have dinner with them.

There is no good info I can easily find on exactly what was going on at Kwajalein during the late 1950s, but it would be a perfectly isolated location to stage tests of unconventional aerial platforms. The place is still shrouded in mystery, as the US Military has released little information on it, other than the fact that rockets are launched and tested there. It is currently home to the Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site.

Yes, my theory may contain more holes than a swiss cheese, but the fact that we hear so little about Kwajalein, and its location, thousands of miles from any major population center or indeed any other sort of civilization, makes me wonder if we will ever find out all that has transpired there.

Beer And UFOs
8/07/2007

Old UFO books are full of reports on witnesses who we are assured "weren't drinking." I've only ever heard of one case where someone was so drunk that our consensus reality took a little vacation, and it wasn't even a UFO case. The man was so sauced that he mistook a Christmas tree for his father–but not an alien.

The point here is that if someone is so drunk they can't tell their ass from a hole in the ground, they are unlikely to report a UFO or aliens or anything. It would be difficult to remember and recall with any degree of accuracy. I've never read a UFO report in which the investigator said "The witness was drunk, so we can't rely on the account." Of course, even if a

witness was inebriated, he or she probably wouldn't reveal that to the interviewer. In any case, so what if they were? Lights in the distance is one thing, a structured craft landing in front of someone is unlikely to be forgotten, whatever state of mind you happen to be in.

But this is all academic. What about aliens shaped like beer cans, waddling around on little "fins?" This is one of my minor favorites, from Long Prairie, Wisconsin on October 23, 1965, and probably made the witness think twice before telling about it. Disk jockey James Towsley was on his way home from the radio station when he saw a "rocket like" object in the road. As he tells it:

> It was about 7:15 p.m. and I was coming back from Little Falls on Highway 27 when I rounded a bend. All of a sudden my engine stopped, my lights went out and my radio stopped playing. I let the car coast and then I put on the brakes because I saw this thing in the center of the highway. It was like a rocket ship. It was about 30-feet tall and about 10 feet in diameter. It was sitting on fins. Then I saw them. They were standing in a big circle of light under the ship. I jumped out of my car and was going to knock one over but then they came at me. They came right up to the car. There were three of them. They had no eyes or anything. Just those tripod legs and the matchstick arms. They were like tin cans. The size of a beer can. I was going to grab one but then I figured that if they could stop my car and put out my lights they could do something awful to me. So we just stood there looking at each other and then they turned around and scooted back under the ship. The light was so bright I didn't see where they went. Then there was a high-pitched humming sound and the ship took off straight up.

The World's First UFO Crash
12/15/2010

Joseph and Etienne Montgolfier were wealthy French paper manufacturers with clients as famous as Louis XVI. They are remembered more readily by history because they devised a method for lifting large weights by trapping hot air in huge silk taffeta bags.

When word of their discoveries reached Paris, the French Academy of Sciences invited them to give a demonstration. Less than a month before their historic 41-foot balloon carried a chicken, a sheep, and a duck over two miles at a height of 1,500 feet in front of the King, Royal Court and Marie Antoinette, the Academy requested one of their members to try building his own.

Jacques Alexandre Cesar Charles was a young physicist who started out with little or no idea about what the Montgolfiers were using to send their inventions skyward. He only knew that they were employing some sort of gas in airtight bags. He had knowledge of the experiments of British scientist Henry Cavendish, who in 1766 discovered a method for producing and trapping hydrogen efficiently. With his assistants, Charles spent three days mixing five hundred pounds of sulfuric acid with a thousand pounds of iron to fill a twelve-foot diameter, rubber-impregnated silk balloon with the gas.

On August 27, 1783, fifty thousand cheering Parisians watched Charles' invention rise to three thousand feet and disappear into the haze. It landed fifteen miles away in the village of Gonesse. Peasants and farmers, well out of the loop on contemporary events, approached it with dread. Writing eighty years later. British historian Hatton Turner described the melee:

> …on first sight it is supposed by many to have come from another world; many fly; others, more sensible, think it is a monstrous bird. After it has alighted, there is yet some motion in it from the gas it still contains. A small crowd gains courage from numbers, and for an hour approaches by gradual steps, hoping meanwhile the monster will take flight. At length one bolder than the rest takes his gun, stalks carefully to within shot, fires, witnesses the monster shrink, gives a shout of triumph, and the crowd rushes in with flails and pitchforks. One tears what he thinks to be the skin, and causes a poisonous stench; again all retire. Shame, no doubt, now urges them on, and they tie the cause of alarm to a horse's tail, who gallops across the country, tearing it to shreds.

Engraving of the incident at Gonesse.

As a result of this panic, the crown issued a statement which began, “A discovery has been made, which the government deems it right to make known, so that alarm be not occasioned on the people.”

If the French government had thought of it, they could have kept the whole thing a secret by telling the public to be aware of strange airships from distant planets which were to be reported immediately to the local authorities, and if found on the Earth, to be left alone until the military could be summoned to dispose of these dangerous denizens from the skies. They could also have spread information that those who believed wild stories about airships were insane.

As it turned out, the French were the first to use balloons in warfare, specifically as an early form of aerial reconnaissance. On June 2, 1794, Captain Jean Marie-Joseph Coutelle rose over a battlefield near the Belgian border, where French forces were battling the Austrian Army. Tethered to the ground, he took along a telescope and reported on the enemy’s movements, which turned the battle decisively for France.

Italy was on the receiving end of the earliest aerial warfare attack when in 1849, Austria launched small, unmanned hot air balloons during a siege of Venice. The devices were designed to carry 30 pound bombs with slow-burning fuses which were timed to explode when they settled back to the ground. They didn’t work very well, just like the Japanese “fugo” inventions of WWII.

The episode in Gonesse shows that humans will often confront something new and unexpected with a sort of frightened awe, and has parallels with the cargo cult phenomenon in the South Pacific islands during and after World War II. Rigid belief systems put us all at a disadvantage, whether in the 18th century, or the 21st.

Los Angeles Air Raid of 1942: Wartime Jitters or UFOs?
2/23/2008

In the early morning hours of February 25th 1942, air raid sirens woke the fitfully sleeping population of Los Angeles at 2:25 AM. Antiaircraft batteries trained their barrels skyward and opened up on targets lighted by arcing searchlights. About 1,400 rounds were fired for the next two hours, hitting nothing but homes and cars throughout the L.A. Basin.

There were three deaths, and three elderly residents reportedly died of heart attacks. There was also one reported murder committed during the blackout of the city.

The day before, a Japanese submarine surfaced off Santa Barbara and shelled an oil facility in the small coastal town of Goleta. Combined with the recent bombing of Pearl Harbor almost three months before, public awareness was at a fever pitch.

The only thing that came out of the sky that evening was a couple of tons of shrapnel. Gunnery officers claimed hundreds of direct hits, but no aircraft, balloons, blimps, or other things authorized to be in the air at the time were found in a tangled wreck on the ground. The next day, Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox stated, "as far as I know the whole raid was a false alarm and could be attributed to jittery nerves." This of course did not explain the thousands of sightings and whatever it was that trained soldiers had seen. Most observers reported multiple objects, although the one photo we are left with comes from the front page of ***Los Angeles Times*** of February 25th, which shows an indistinct, but vaguely flying saucer-shaped object.

Optical physicist/ufologist Bruce Maccabee wrote a detailed report on this incident which concluded that, based on estimates of altitude and spread of the light beams, the object was about 330 feet across. The fact remains that for at least an hour, apparently something slower than an aircraft and which couldn't be damaged by a constant barrage of large-caliber shells floated over the greater Los Angeles area in the pre-dawn hours of February 25th, 1942.

UFO Book From 1871
8/08/2008

In 1979, St. Martin's Press published a book entitled *An Account Of A Meeting With Denizens Of Another World* by a Victorian cabinetmaker and undertaker named William Robert Loosley. Edited and with commentary by SF writer David Langford, it was a transcription of a manuscript found hidden in an old desk, apparently written to document a UFO sighting and a late 19th century encounter with some sort of inscrutable animated machines which dropped from the sky.

In this secret manuscript, Loosley wrote that he witnessed a "moving star" near his home, then went for a walk in the woods the following afternoon and found a strange object where the "star" had alighted the previous night:

> It is no easy matter to describe what I saw; a thing at whose sight a fresh access of awe and wonder held me rooted to the spot. The first likeness which sprang to my mind was from an engraving of Plato's perfect solids (as apprentice I was once set to carve all five in boxwood): the Icosahedron or twenty-faced body.
>
> The skulker in the leaves, then, resembled an Icosahedron all of glittering metal; about eighteen inches in height, with perhaps more facets than your true Platonic body (I am not certain), and these less perfect in their regularity. But the edges were not sharp; they were rounded and smoothed by some craftsman who could achieve in metal what's difficult enough in wood.
>
> The symmetry was marred further by many small nubs and protuberances of the same shiny metal; scarcely a facet was free of such a blemish…with the sound of a small and well-oiled lock, it opened what I could think of was an eye. To be exact, one rounded protuberance which now pointed towards me proved itself to be moveable; the metal skin thereof flew back into the body of this object, disclosing a glass or crystal lens a little less than an inch across.

Loosley describes a slow-paced chase which ensued, the little apparatus following him though the woods, which soon ended as he turned and followed it back as it picked up a dead rat and stole his walking stick, placing it into a larger object which closed its door. After a sort of light

show, a large, "faceted thing" arrived and bestowed a sort of psychodrama on the puzzled carpenter. Shortly after nightfall, the objects disappeared into the heavens.

Whitley Strieber referred to this account in his excellent 1989 novel *Majestic*. It remained one of those obscure stories that some UFO enthusiasts remember from "somewhere," and refer to when looking for evidence to impress the curious.

Strieber (and undoubtedly others) were not amused when Langford confessed that he had made the whole thing up. He wrote to Langford's publisher when working on the book, but the letter was never forwarded and Streiber decided to incorporate it anyway as part of his "factional" story.

Langford had access to all of the relevant biographical information on Loosley's family, as he was married to the supposed author's great-great granddaughter. To his credit as a fictional writer, the text is remarkably accurate in the British Victorian idiom (at least to my untutored eye) and he apparently took pains to research the relevant UFO, contactee and abduction literature and adapt it to a supposed 19th century mindset. There are a few subtle slip-ups, but nothing that would really alert the casual reader. One glaring hint that the whole thing was a put-on is that no reproductions of Loosley's actual manuscript are included.

It also seems strange that Langford would state in the preface:

> The great problem of UFOs has always been the tendency of people to call them unidentified flying objects and, in almost the same breath, to identify them-normally as visitors from somewhere Out There. To leap from a belief that certain phenomena are unidentified to the assertion of extraterrestrial origin is not exactly in accordance with scientific logic, unless some chain of evidence can be established (and no, we cannot simply throw out the entire edifice of scientific logic with such readiness.) But neither is it scientific to dismiss the problem.

I am not sure if Langford is an interested skeptic or a skeptical "believer," but he does drop hints here and there in the text that the UFO subject is worthy of study by serious people. Was he joking about this too?

What About Female UFO Contactees?
1/04/08

Dana Howard was one of the few 1950s contactees who happened to be a woman. I can only think of one other woman from the classic contactee era who produced any public record of her experiences. In the heavily male-dominated world of 1950s America, Howard stands out in a field where contactees often lingered on descriptions of their encounters with shapely space babes. The description Lee provides of Howard's alien has no real overt sexual overtones, unless you think she was a lesbian. Howard described her "Diane" as

> …a woman being of unsurpassed loveliness. Her head was radiant with a crown of fire, strands of golden hair cascading gently over her beautiful, slightly olive-tinted shoulders. The strange mystic light flooding her dark, prophetic eyes, added a wistful something to all her other charms.

Researcher Regan Lee reports that Howard also claimed a materialization of this being at a 1955 seance in Los Angeles. The "Church Of Divine Light," where this incident took place, still exists. It is now a Filipino Pentecostal Church. At the time, perhaps it was simply medium Reverend Bertie Lillie Candler's home.

Like George Adamski and his first contact in the California desert, Howard also had multiple witnesses to the spirit's appearance. Unlike Adamski, they were apparently not simply other contactees and highly interested parties. Does this mean that Howard is more believable, or that she and the Rev. Candler hoaxed their audience?

A bit of looking reveals other women in the contact business, even before the 1950s. I would class Theosophical founder Helena Blavatsky as a contactee, and Catherine Müller (aka Helene Smith) profiled in *From India To The Planet Mars*, believed that she had lived on the Red Planet in a previous life. Edna Ballard, wife of Guy Ballard, presided over the I AM movement and also channeled extraplanetary spirits.

Moving into the 1950s and ’60s, other women on the space brother scene included Hope Troxell, Aleuti Francesca, and Gloria Lee. Like their forebears, their contacts consisted wholly of channels and spiritual episodes. In 1972, perhaps the most famous female contactee, Ruth Norman, took over the reins of the Unarius Academy, after the death of her husband Ernest. In the 1970s, Thelma B. Turrell channeled the edicts of beings from the Ashtar Command.

It is interesting to note that almost none of the female contactees actually claimed any physical contact with space people, Dana Howard and Mollie Thompson being the sole standouts (although Thompson later claimed that there were no actual meetings.) What this may indicate is a basic difference in psychology between the sexes. Perhaps women feel that a spiritual/ mental bond with their channeled contacts is just as important (perhaps more so) than males.

Mollie Thompson: “From Worlds Afar”
1/8/09

1950-‘60s British UFO contactee Mollie Thompson is most remembered for wonderful music she composed and sang about her visits with space people.

Andy Roberts, co-author (with David Clarke) contacted and interviewed Thompson for their 2007 book *Flying Saucerers*. As of April of 2008, Ms. Thompson was still alive and wrote a reply to an online entry on her album *From Worlds Afar***,** released on the “Asteroid” label in 1966:

> Mutterings from Mollie.
>
> Yes, I’m still here–alive and–if not kicking, at least the motor is still ticking over.
>
> Somebody said to me the other week, ’So, what are you doing now?’I had to have a little think about that, but eventually I came up with a reply.
>
> “The secrecy of my work prevents me from knowing what I am doing”
>
> It is over 40 years since I wrote and sang those songs about space people. I didn’t know what I was doing then either…but I

had great fun doing it.

I'm sure you have guessed by now that I never actually met and spoke with flesh and blood space people in silver suits who had arrived in their vehicles: flying saucers or UFO's.

Vehicle is the key word here; my songs were the vehicle to carry my thoughts and ideas out into the world. But as for who wrote them ?? I was NOT telling lies when I said that it was not me…certainly not the "me" that is sitting here writing this.

Every person is far MORE than the sum of their parts, and MORE than they appear to be.

Each individual is more knowing, more understanding, more loving and more loveable, and each of us has the potential to be a truly wonderful human being. That MORE was what created the song words and also what pushed me gently aside and took over the driving of the vehicle—for a while. Then someone was jumping back into the driving seat saying 'Step back, let me live this life'.

However, the older I get the more I hope to see MORE at the wheel, driving the vehicle.

She is a better driver than I am !

Cheers,

Have a good life,

Mollie Thompson

Her non-literal attitude on her contact reminds me of a video I still have somewhere of an Orfeo Angelucci (American UFO contactee) interview from the mid-1980s. In it he says something like "What I think happened is that I dreamed it and it came back through my subconscious as visions." Does this mean that Mollie, Orfeo, and others dreamed everything up without acknowledging the non-physical source of their experiences that kept saucer fans on the edge of their seats in the 1950s and '60s? Perhaps. I prefer to think that at least a few of them may have had at least some mental contact with things from outside of their own consciousness, and chose to frame it in a science-fiction context, because it was the only mental "box" they had to put it in.

Her songs are innocent, spiritual and optimistic, and almost move me to tears. While everyone else apparently chose to write books about space

brothers, Thompson channeled a very listenable message and set it to music. Of course, many musicians, authors, and other artists have said that they are only a vehicle or channel for what is attributed to them.

Much more on Thompson is available on a site maintained by Simon Murphy (now archived.) Her songs can be accessed with a short search on youtube.

Messenger Of Deception
9/2/2008

A strange volume, called *My Contact With Flying Saucers*, was first published in English 1959 by metaphysical publishers Neville Spearman in London. What some readers (including myself, until a few years ago) may not know is that author Dino Kraspedon was the pen name of one Aladino Felix, whose strange story still stands as a warning.

Felix appeared on Brazilian TV in 1959 to predict a coming era of worldwide political turmoil and revolution, which soon followed. How he knew this is anyone's guess, but according to some writers, he reportedly gazed into his alien crystal ball to predict the assassinations of JFK and Martin Luther King.

Brazil was not spared from this period of terrorism, which included bombings and attempts on the lives of political figures. In early August of 1968, Felix again appeared on national TV and declared that his space people experiences as reported in *My Contact* were all made up. Later in the same month, he was arrested and charged with conspiracy in many of the same acts of violence he had previously predicted. He had apparently gathered a group of believers around him who had gone from peaceful study of space brother lore to political activism. While under arrest, in one of many contradictions in his public statements, he predicted that Venusians would bust him and his friends out of jail and wreak their revenge on the Earth.

On March 30, 1971, Felix was finally sentenced to eight years, but was released in 1972 provided he went directly to a mental institution for treatment. He has since disappeared and may be dead by now.

It is surprising that Jacques Vallée apparently did not mention the Kraspedon/ Felix case in his landmark book *Messengers of Deception*,

given that the case illustrated his warnings about UFO contactee movements and their potential for mind control and political unrest. In his 1970 book *Operation Trojan Horse*, John Keel theorized that Felix may have been under the control of some sort of malevolent force that acted through human agents, and had been for centuries. One only has to look at episodes such as the Aum Shin Rikyo cult and Heaven's Gate to realize that there is sometimes a thin line between harmless new age homilies and death.

Is Roswell In The Eye Of The Beholder?
6/24/09

Many readers may know about the famous photograph from the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* taken on July 8th of 1947. A young photographer on the staff, J. Bond Johnson, was sent to the Fort Worth Army Airfield and shown to the office of General Roger Ramey to take pictures of debris recovered from the crash of an object near Roswell. In the 1990s, researchers noticed that in one of the photos, General Ramey was holding a piece of paper in his hand. Some claimed that words such as "victims" "crash," and "weather balloons" could be made out when the photo was magnified.

The controversy raged for many years until James Houran from the Dept. of Psychiatry of the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine and Roswell UFO crash researcher and advocate Kevin Randle decided to put the "Ramey memo" to a test. A paper published in Vol. 16 #1 (2002) of the *Journal of Scientific Exploration* described an experiment that presented three groups of subjects with the best images available and asked them to pick out any words that they could see:

> Previous analyses of a photograph showing a document held by General Ramey from the Roswell UFO case reportedly revealed content that supported a crashed extraterrestrial craft scenario. Other investigators of this document suggested, however, that it was ambiguous stimuli being interpreted by pro-Roswell investigators in accordance with their expectations. To assess the possible extent of bias in these interpretations, we had three

> randomly assigned groups of participants attempt to decipher the document under different suggestion conditions: one condition in which we told participants (N= 59) they were looking at a document pertaining to the famous Roswell UFO case, a second condition in which we told participants (N= 58) that they were looking at a document pertaining to secret testing of the atomic bomb, and a final condition in which participants (N= 59) were told nothing about the possible content of the document.

What the study found was that at least in this case, the participants saw what they expected to see. The lowest number of words were discerned by the group who were told nothing about the image. The most words "found" (almost the same amount from both groups) were from the participants who were told that the photo either pertained to the Roswell UFO crash or some sort of atomic test.

> The surprisingly high agreement between our participants and previous investigators on specific words in identical locations in the Ramey memo suggests that some of the document is indeed legible, even without computer enhancement. However, the meaning or context of those words remains ambiguous because the degree of interpretation of the document is strongly influenced by suggestion effects and the interpreter's cognitive style. We are inclined to believe that such effects have also tainted the previous studies on the memo using sophisticated software because there appears to be weak interrater reliability among these earlier analysts. In fact, ufologists are probably among the least effective people to be trying to decipher the document. This opinion stems from our observation that one of the main factors arguably influencing the number of words deciphered in this study is the motivation of the participants. Note that those in the Pro-UFO condition spent more time examining the images and subsequently perceived the greatest number of words in the Ramey memo.

We might expand this idea to the whole problem of perception amongst those who try to convince us that something exists (UFOs) which are not currently testable in the scientific sense, and their confusion as to why more

people cannot see what is "obvious" to them. Unfortunately, a large portion of this group are locked in to a belief system which dictates that this untestable phenomenon is the result of visitors from other planets, which is an assumption riding on a theory. This attitude has still not garnered serious attention from some who should be looking at the enigma.

It is fairly certain that many people have witnessed anomalous flying objects and even apparent entities associated with them for millenia, but the problem is getting the gatekeepers of consensus reality to acknowledge that the weight of observed evidence is worthy of at least some serious attention and study. Whether this involves a closer examination of our perception and beliefs, or of the reports themselves (or more likely both) deserves consideration.

Cleric Reports "Gentle Little People" Invading Home
10/06/07

Roman Catholic Bishop Donald Pelotte, 62 of Gallup, New Mexico made an emergency call to local police on September 27, 2007. He said that something strange was in his home and wouldn't leave. Specifically, he reported to police operators that "…gentle little people, about 3 to 4 feet tall, and wearing Halloween masks" were in the hall. A news item from the Albuquerque ABC affiliate also says that Pelotte had suffered "a fall" a few months ago which has intermittently landed him in recovery centers and hospitals since July. When police responded, they found nothing out of the ordinary (except possibly Pelotte hiding in the hallway closet.)

Interesting issues are raised by this episode. Gallup is at the center of two American Indian nations–the Hopi and Navajo tribes. What Pelotte describes reminds me of Kachinas, the Native American personifications of forces of nature and the supernatural, which are impersonated by tribal members at annual festivals and religious observations. Since he has ministered to people in the area, perhaps the indigenous belief systems are impinging on his consciousness since his "fall." Maybe kachinas visit people from time to time anyway, or they got the wrong address, or it was the right address long ago. Perhaps Pelotte is just "going crazy."

This is also reminiscent of the Pascagoula abduction case of 1973, when Charles Hickson and Calvin Parker said that they encountered beings

who looked (to me) a bit like kachinas [see front cover.] I haven't heard anyone else make this comparison, but it raises questions about archetypes and the subconscious which are almost never asked by people who study the UFO phenomenon.

Pelotte will be evaluated by other Catholic clerics who "will make decisions concerning his involvement in the church." I bet they will.

Missing Millionaire Aviator Captured by Aliens
02/27/08

This story has been skulking around for a few weeks now, and there is of course no way to prove any of it (just like most of the UFO subject) but it has elements of contacteeism and other urban (and internet) myths that are interesting and that I also happen to enjoy.

You may be aware of the disappearance of Steven Fossett in September of last year. Fossett held multiple world records in flight (among them, first circumnavigation of the globe in a balloon and an airplane, the speed record for an airship and the glider altitude record of 50,727 feet.) He took off on the morning of September 3, 2007 in a single engine trainer, reportedly to look for dry lake beds in Nevada on which to attempt land speed records. He did not file a flight plan.

When Fossett was not heard from for several hours (after the plane should have run out of fuel) a large search effort was engaged by the Civil Air Patrol and other organizations. As the search wore on and nothing was discovered, satellite imagery was used, which located previously unknown air crash sites, but no trace of Fossett was ever found. On November 27, Fossett's wife asked to have her husband declared legally dead.

Now, someone calling himself "Simon" claims to be receiving emails from a friend of Fossett's claiming that the famous explorer was searching for some sort of dimensional hole populated with aliens:

> He told me that he had spotted a mysterious white light of circular shape on the ground during one of his reconnaissance flights around the neighborhood. He said he had never noticed that light before. He told me that he went back home without investigating but kept thinking about the light and where it could

> be coming from, since it was in a deserted region. He just went on and on with the light and I couldn't even say one word. He said that he went back a few days later to investigate, but the light had somehow moved about a quarter mile up north. He landed. Almost as if the light had felt him approaching, it instantly moved to a nearby hill. He said he couldn't believe what was happening in front of him and he tried to call home to tell Peggy. But his phone mysteriously had died. As he approached, he could see that the light was in fact a large "hole", and there were several blue-ish humanoids moving inside. Nobody seemed to notice him as he walked closer, and he was beginning to see what was like a whole new society in there, half-underground, half-exposed to sun light, right there in the middle of the desert.

The account resembles many others that have come out of the desert southwest telling of lost undergound races, some of them most likely perpetrated in order to advance land or mining schemes. He also claims that Fossett is now living with the underground aliens. Of course I have no faith in this story, but I am interested in how the anonymous "friend" intends to keep the stories going. It's also disappointing that he may be using the name and reputation of a truly great explorer to advance a weird story. One statement is revealing:

> I assure you I want no money or attention from the media for this, I just wanted to share this bizarre story with someone who believed me. A New York Times journalist called me a "nut job" but I assure you I am of sound body and mind, and I really do hope that one day my friend Steve will come clear this up for us…

If he wants no attention from the media, how did a NYT writer find out about him?

One possibility for the disappearance is that Fossett may have wandered into restricted airspace and been dealt with by unscrupulous missiles or jet fighters. Admittedly, the probability is remote, since Fossett should have been well familiar with the area and military operations zones. Perhaps the shadowy "M," as he refers to himself, is a counterintelligence agent testing the rumor mill. Who knows?

If there is any truth to the story, it might be interesting, but it will probably die away like so many others. Have the Coast to Coast people got ahold of this one yet?

Another pre-UFOmystic piece found recently, in which my primitive writing style shines with the dull glow of someone who thinks they know what's going on. It's basically a reproduction of the sort of exciting stories I used to read as a kid.

Midgets and Beasties and Robots, Oh My!
Close Encounters of the Non-Humanoid Kind
10/02/01

For longer than anyone can remember, people have been seeing weird things swoop down from the sky, and even weirder things have been seen stepping out of them.

Skeptics often argue that the similarity of UFO occupant reports is "proof" that the database is so contaminated that witnesses will only report the standard "grey" or other humanoid forms because that is all they can come up with. Another yardstick of proof in this vein maintains that researchers and abduction enthusiasts lead witnesses to report only those things that conform to their own predisposed ideas of what these beings should look like. These explanations, although dismissive, are often valid and the will to believe, along with the human tendency to block out or comfortably interpret things that are unfamiliar certainly plays an important role in the decoding of entity reports.

These tidy arguments quickly break down however, when people encounter headless, batwinged things, or metallic stalklike visitors who cured a witness of cancer after causing him to crash his plane. Many reports of animated, but non-human beings stepping, crawling, gliding, or sliding out of UFOs come from outside the U.S., lending credence to the idea that people will see what they expect to see, and when they expect nothing, will perceive anything.

Many jaded readers will fondly recall classic cases of outre entities like the Kelly-Hopkinsville "elves," the spade-headed Flatwoods Monster, with its billowing skirtlike lower body, and the glowing eyes of the legendary

Mothman. It's often easy to forget the horror and confusion of the witnesses in these events. They have been repeated ad nauseum, to the point that these beings could easily be turned into cuddly stuffed animals. Perhaps they already have been, or soon will be. The Flatwoods creature has in fact been fashioned into a solid metal doorstop-type affair and marketed by an enterprising rural West Virgininan, humorously documented in director Ralph Coon's 1998 Gray Barker biopic, *Whispers From Space*.

The Pascagoula, Mississippi case from October, 1973, was a double UFO abduction by figures who victim Charles Hickson described as robots with "elephantlike" skin. The abductors were essentially "mummy" shaped, with legs fused together into one limb. They floated quickly towards Hickson and Calvin Parker before grabbing them by the upper arms with pincer-like hands and leading them into a landed craft. The silent, emotionless figures had long, spindly, triangular affairs sticking out of their heads where ears and a nose would have been and sound curiously like certain depictions of certain Native American deities called Kachinas, who represent various aspects and forces of the natural world. Apparently, no one has delved into this possible connection yet.

The presence of hairy, humanoid "bigfoot"-type creatures appearing near landed UFOs is a well-established phenomenon, at least in North America. A wave of aerial object sightings in Pennsylvania in 1973 featured numerous accounts of giant, hair-covered entities either in the vicinity of flitting lights and craft, or wandering about in the lights shining down from them. One account from near the town of Beaver in October of that year described something that left three-toed tracks and carried a glowing orb in one hand while a lighted disc hovered nearby, tracking the ground with a beam of light. UFO and other weird events often go hand in hand when a wave of sightings strikes.

During the same period of Pennsylvania sightings one witness managed to take a couple of shots at an eight foot tall hairy hominid creature that was walking along a fence in the company of a slightly shorter being of similar appearance. As he hit it in the chest area, it let loose with a strange whining noise and reached toward its companion. A large, dome-shaped UFO hovering nearby winked out and the creatures walked off into a stand of trees. Visiting the scene a short time later in the company of police officer/ UFO investigator Stan Gordon and five other witnesses, the man had a psychotic break and knocked his father and another man to the ground

while making growling noises. He later said that during this episode he had a vision of a man in a black cloak and carrying a sickle who warned that, “If man doesn’t straighten up, the end will come soon.” Psychologist Berthold Schwarz later talked to the witness, who continued to have apocalyptic visions long after the experience.

Like UFOs, Bigfoot is seen, and leaves traces of his passing, but no lasting physical evidence. There was even a “hairy giant” case from France in 1954.

Another sort of hairy creature appeared with frightening regularity throughout Latin America beginning in the early 1950s. These dwarfish entities were almost always out to start a fight, and often left dazed and frightened witnesses with a few brutal scratches before scampering off into the brush, or a craft landed nearby.

A typical (?) encounter emerged in 1954 near Caracas, Venezuela. Two men were driving a van through the suburbs of the city when they came upon a 10-foot wide luminous orb hovering above a street. One of the men, Gustavo Gonzalez, got out to investigate and was immediately set upon by a lightweight, hair-covered midget that pushed him back about 15 feet with what seemed like little effort. He drew a knife and tried to stab it, but the weapon felt like it was bouncing off steel. He was then blinded with a beam of light from a tube brandished by another being that had emerged from the hovering object. Two similar creatures emerged from the side of the road carrying armfuls of rocks and jumped into the sphere, which shot away and was soon lost from sight.

Latin America seemed to be “weird creature central” throughout the 1950s. There were cases of humanoids with one, cyclops-type eye, and even three. Three boys in Brazil met a “man” in what looked like an inflated diver’s suit in August of 1963. The occupant floated down to the ground on a brilliant beam of light. Through his transparent helmet, the boys observed a bright red complexion, and a single, browless eye in the center of his “face.” One of the boys tried to throw a brick at it, but the thing turned and shot an orange beam at him, which paralyzed his arm and forced him to drop it. Two other creatures of identical appearance remained at the controls of the craft, one of them appeared to be female. They guessed this because “she” had long hair pulled back into a ponytail. Maybe she was wearing lipstick as well.

These days, our South American compatriots seem only to have the Chupacabras to keep them guessing, but the culture seems to have produced the most bizarre humanoid reports in existence, at least up to the mid-1960s.

Many sightings have involved completely non-human occupants. They range from the ridiculous to the downright surreal. In the late '50s, a cylindrical thing looking like it was covered in tan terrycloth (without any eyes) was encountered near a landed craft in the Peruvian desert by a highway traveler. Three cylinder-shaped, robotlike objects looking very like beer cans waddling on pairs of fins approached Jerry Townsend after his car stopped on a road near Long Prarie, Minnesota on the night of October 23, 1965. As he watched, they retreated into a rocketlike ship resting at the roadside. He insisted that he hadn't been drinking. The "drunk" argument always seems farfetched, since anyone sufficiently inebrieated to hallucinate anything would probably not be in any condition to relate a coherent story, and would actually realize that they had been incapacitated at the time, reducing the chances of any reports ever reaching local law enforcement or UFO investigators.

November, 1962 saw the appearance of "beasts, some kind of bizarre animals, with the heads of birds, and covered in some sort of plumage" which attacked a French businessman in his car late at night. Through the driving rain, he saw them "heading, with a sort of flapping of wings, towards a luminous dark blue object which hung in the air over a field on the other side of the road. It resembled two plates upside down, and placed upon one another. On reaching it, these 'birds' were literally sucked into the underpart of the machine, as if by a whirlwind. Then I heard a dull sound, [like a] 'clack' and the object flew off at a prodigious speed…"

This is a singularly strange case, but the symbolism of the archetypal bird-headed entities (like the Egyptian deity Thoth) may be significant as part of the "ignored" database, and the fact that no reports of a similar nature are existent in the Americas may be due more to a cultural bias than any other factor.

Another case for "expectations" (or no expectations) bias happened early on the morning of August 16, 1968, in Serra de Almos, Spain. A farmer out doing chores spotted a light in the distance. Thinking he was setting out to help a stranded driver, the man approached to find a glowing sphere hovering about a foot off the ground. From the opposite side of the

object, the farmer observed two "octopuslike" things lumbering towards him. They appeared to walk on "four or five" legs towards the craft, which shot off into the sky after the entities had boarded. As easy as it would be to dismiss this story, reporters and UFO investigators later found a patch of burned grass at the site, and watches stopped working for no apparent reason when bought into the vicinity of the sighting.

The Hill abduction case of 1961 (not reported until 1966) gained such widespread publicity that it seemed to close the door on an era of widely varying "alien" types associated with UFO sightings. The figures described by Barney (and his wife Betty) Hill diverged slightly between their individual accounts (more expectations bias?) but both seemed to agree that they were under five feet tall, had large heads tapering to pointed chins, and large, wraparound eyes with irises and pupils. This event, published in John Fuller's 1966 book *The Interrupted Journey*, effectively paved the way for almost all abduction accounts to follow. Abduction researchers have all read the Fuller book, and consciously or not, may limit their study and even perception to the standard "grey" beings.

In the last ten years or so, one possibly disturbing development in the abduction realm is the appearance of so-called "reptilian" beings amongst the "standard" cases. Most researchers choose to ignore these experiences, but reports that started as anomalies have began to flow in steadily in defiance of expectations. One prominent member of the community who is taking these stories at face value is Dr. John Mack of Harvard University, who writes in the introduction to Los Angeles abductee Pamela Stonebrooke's book *Experiencer*, "…dinosaurs and reptiles did and do exist outside of ourselves, and within the encounter phenomenon creatures like these may come to the experiencers with such power and intensity as to leave little doubt that from whatever dimension they may derive, they are real and are experienced physically, even leaving claw scratches and other marks on the experiencers' bodies."

Abduction researchers David Jacobs and Budd Hopkins (among others) publicly insist that the greys are the only race visiting us for the purposes of abducting humans, performing breeding and hybridization experiments on them, and (for Jacobs) taking over our lives and our planet. When British investigators agreed to forgo hypnosis as a research tool, the accounts began to vary widely. This either suggests that aliens are in the eye of the beholder, there are many races visiting our world or dimension, or that

hypnosis is the best tool for recovering memories that have been overlaid by weeks, months, or years of subconscious coverup.

It has been found that the hypnotic trance, while useful in recalling vaguely remembered, even disturbing memories is useful in probing for mundane, earthly events, may be distinctly unhelpful in the case of an extraordinary experience. This is because the mind is in a highly suggestible state when under hypnosis, and with no reference points to ground someone during a weird and/ or frightening experience, people look for the first, best, or even vaguely suggested way to start dealing with suppressed memories of a close encounter with the unknown. There may even be unconscious leading on the part of the researcher, and the possibility of subconscious and even psychic cueing is not out of the realm of possibility.

We may have seen the end of the era of truly strange UFO occupants, but this may be a signal to start looking at cases which may be occurring outside the realm of our dominant culture. John Carpenter, a sociologist and abduction researcher associated with the Mutual UFO Network, says that most of his colleagues relegate reports that don't fit in to the standard entity/ examination scenario to a "bulging grey basket." As the late abductee/ author Karla Turner said, "the truth to me is more likely going to lie in the anomalous details," but perhaps the last word should be reserved for famed British author and Flying Saucer Review editor Gordon Creighton: "We dream of a logical universe; what if it isn't logical at all, but a vast surrealist nightmare?"

5 - Weirdness Unbound: Other Phenomena

THE PERILS OF BEING A CROP CIRCLE MAKER

Weird things are all around us. We just have to look and listen (or have the right search terms to plug in.) Some of the subjects in this chapter share a definite overlap with UFOs, such as crop circles (and the weirdness that is sometimes encountered while hoaxing them, as seen above). My skeptical side shows with examinations of the phenomena known as "orbs" as well as "rods," which are anomalies that appear on film and video. This and a few other entries in this chapter will prove that I can actually stop thinking about UFOs on occasion. The last entry is a lengthy article on ghosts and hauntings which was a result of my research for the book Weird California.

The "Orbs" Controversy
6/18/2007

For many years, especially since the advent of digital cameras, there has been a lot of excitement over strange balls of light that appear with disturbing frequency in photos. Almost anyone can look at a picture they have taken (especially with a flash) and see these ubiquitous anomalies. Some call them "spirit orbs," others see UFOs.

Apparently, no one had taken the obvious step of examining this phenomenon in a scientific manner, until the Fall 2005 issue of the *Journal of the Society for Scientific Exploration*, where researchers Gary Schwartz and Katherine Creath (of the Optical Sciences Center at the University of Arizona, Tucson) put the theory to the test.

One thousand photographs were taken with five different digital cameras over multiple sessions under conditions that would purportedly increase the chance of observing Anomalous Orbic Images (AOIs.) This included two "spiritual energy healers" performing various diagnostic and treatment procedures in a semi-dark room. More than two hundred photographs contained AOIs. Careful examination of the photographs revealed a plausible conventional optical mechanism that could explain most of the AOIs observed.

What the researchers found was that the "orbs" were present when a light source or reflection of one was present in the picture. The lens elements in the camera reflected the light source to another area of the image, producing a "ghost" or double of the original. The researchers also found that stray objects in the picture (dust particles mostly) also produced some "orbic anomalies." Another interesting development: the more inexpensive the camera, the more "orb" images it produced, due to the low quality of the elements, lens coatings, etc.

The conclusion of the researchers was that the majority of "orbs" could be explained by normal means. They were careful to add that this did not account for all reported instances of "Anomalous Orbic Images," but Schwartz and Creath have given us a valuable tool to examine future claims of this type. In their own words:

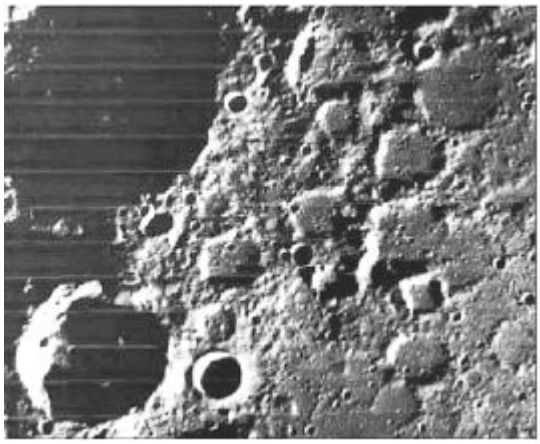
Spiritual or otherworldly interpretations of "orbs" in photographs should only be considered under conditions in which all sources of stray reflection and diffraction have been eliminated from the environment. [2]

They conclude with a couple of examples of orb-appearing anomalies that cannot be explained by their hypothesis. This is one example of why I like the Society For Scientific Exploration.

[2] http://www.u.arizona.edu/~kcreath/pdf/pubs/2005_GES_KC_JSE_v19p343_orbic_photos.pdf

Square Craters On The Moon
11/14/2007

In the last published issue of my old magazine, *The Excluded Middle*, we included a report on apparent angular craters about 200 miles from the north pole of the moon. My friend and co-editor, Peter Stenshoel, met the author at a social function. In the course of casual conversation, William Haynes mentioned that he had written a privately published paper on lunar anomalies.

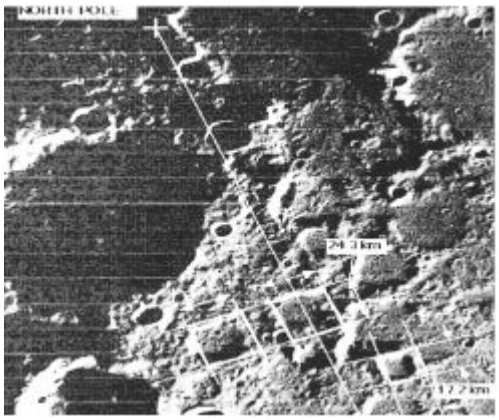


Haynes is no kook. He has a distinguished career in aerospace spanning over 50 years, and a degree in mechanical engineering. In the preface to his 1990 paper, he wrote:

> In 1970 NASA published a selected compilation of lunar photographs in a book entitled: “The Moon as Viewed by Lunar Orbiter” by L.J. Kosofsky and Farouk El-Baz. Among the photos taken was one of an area near the Lunar North Pole. It appears on Pg. 14 and is captioned (in part): “The very low solar elevation

brings out the apparent squareness of the shallow depressions at E13, G12, and J14 ″ (The references are to coordinates on the photo).

"Square craters?" I was intrigued! In fact, so intrigued that I ordered a full size copy of that photograph.



Using shadows and the angle of the sun at this latitude, Haynes calculated the smallest of these three anomalies to have walls of about 4600 feet in height. There are two larger formations and the smaller is exactly half their size.

Haynes presents a careful analysis of these interesting anomalies. His final statement should be intriguing enough:

> …there are only two possible over-all conclusions: The first is that I have applied procrustean reasoning to an accident of nature; in short, that I am seeing things that are not there. The second is that we are confronted with an alien artifact at least 3.9 billion years old and of truly colossal proportions.

In strange coda to this story, in 1999, Haynes contacted the administrators of the Clementine Naval moon-mapping project to request clearer images of the anomalous area, and discovered that one of the images was apparently altered with some sort of photo editing software.

Suspension of Psychic Belief
5/05/2009

A thoughtful article by Robert McLuhan on Uri Geller is available at his Paranormalia blog.[1] His comments sum up just what I think of Geller at present: He fools people when he needs to (which may be a lot) but has also apparently demonstrated truly unexplainable abilities from time to time. The fact that he does engage in sleight-of-hand is reason one for fundamentalist skeptics to dismiss all of his claims, even though he has demonstrated strange abilities in lab settings more than once. Can he fool scientists? Of course, but ALL of them?

A few years ago, I got into a discussion about Geller with my friend, cyberpunk author John Shirley. John was surprised that I accepted Geller's "flimflammery" as genuine. I cited a book entitled *The Geller Papers*, which contains a wealth of articles on Geller by scientists and even magicians, some of whom were not ready to dismiss Geller out of hand. John said that the scientists were probably in collusion with Geller, or fooled by him. I countered that it was difficult to dismiss all the studies, particularly ones where the samples that Geller affected were either out of his control or sealed from his touch. I am not aware of any controlled study which examines the reported instances of metal continuing to bend after Geller has finished touching it, or indeed after he has left the premises. In any case, I prefer to leave the Geller question open.

Adding to the strange soup is the fact that Geller said he had been contacted in the early 1970s by an alien entity called SPECTRA which relayed messages to him through a supercomputer that was orbiting the Earth–shades of the contactees and of course Phillip K. Dick's VALIS experience. He also claimed UFO sightings from a very young age.

Early in his career, his American compatriot Dr. Andrija Puharich claimed so many bizarre occurrences with Geller that there was really no hope of convincing anyone in the academic community or the mainstream media of anything connected with the psychic. Puharich has been accused of colluding with Geller to sell some sort of scheme to addle-headed new agers, but the project never materialized, even after Puharich wrote a book about his experiences. He also arranged for Geller to be tested at respectable laboratories. The real story behind all this weirdness remains to be told, although Colin Wilson made a stab at it in his 1981 book, *The Unexplained*.

[1] http://monkeywah.typepad.com/paranormalia/2009/05/uri-geller.html

The "Rods" Controversy
3/31/2008

Like many of you, when I first saw videos of the cryptozoological phenomena dubbed "rods," I was fascinated by their seeming ubiquity. How the hell could something like this have gone on for so long without getting any notice?

The darting behavior, and the almost protozoan-like appearance of these newly discovered animals caused a huge sensation in the mid-to-late 1990s. There is an online article[2] which claims that optical physicist/ufologist Bruce Maccabee said that the objects "are between 2 and 4 meters in length." It is also claimed that they travel at speeds of up to 300 mph. Others have theorized that they are miniature UFOs of some sort. (I'm assuming here that they mean smaller versions of what are assumed structured craft of unknown origin.)

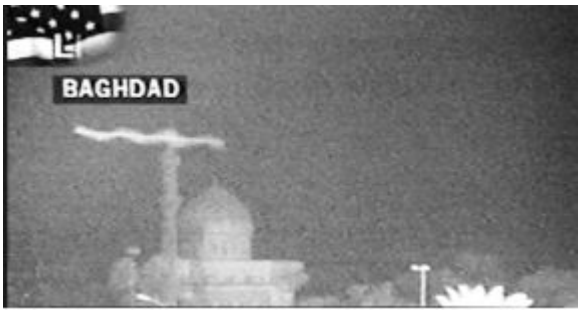
I believe the reason that this had gone on so long without any scientific notice was that people who had seen them on video and film in years previous to about 1995 had either ignored them or realized that these mysterious "animals" were most likely insects.

Jose Escamilla, the man most credited with bringing the rods phenomenon to public attention, still claims that it represents a real heretofore undiscovered life form. He is currently asking for $175,000 to produce a high-definition video presentation.

Escamilla claims that rods will show up at higher shutter speeds and with better resolution on high-definition video as well as film. Since I have never seen this for myself, I'll have to withhold judgment.

The use of standard 30 frames/60 fields-per-second NTSC video rates produces "rod" like artifacts that are virtually indistinguishable from the more famous footage shot by Escamilla and others in his camp, and they have been shown to be video and still pictures of insects. A photography group performed an experiment with thrown objects to see how the video process treated fast-moving objects and came up with the same conclusion.

I've worked in the video and film industry for about 15 years now, and I've seen many examples of this phenomenon.



"Rod" caught on news footage of Gulf War (Source: Fox News)

Now, there may be rod-like images that show up on better video and film equipment at different shutter speeds and in different lighting etc, but why should we assume that a known phenomenon (insects showing up as "rods") are a separate issue from an unknown that looks exactly like it?

If anyone has access to an HD camera with variable shutter speed settings, you might want to try this experiment yourself, although the History Channel's program *Monster Quest* has already performed a version of it. Escamilla cries foul on his site, but without the supporting evidence he claimed was left out of the program; we are left with nothing but his report.

I would truly like to discover that rods are some form of fast-moving airborne life form, but the evidence I've seen doesn't support it. Actually, I think I have met Mr. Escamilla, and if I remember correctly, he was a pretty cool and pleasant guy. Unfortunately, that isn't enough to sell ideas to more than a small portion of the population.

Perhaps he will get his wish and will be able to prove his hypothesis. It would be a pleasant surprise, and the vindicated underdog is always a great story. Unfortunately, I sort of doubt that this will happen.

[When I was hanging out with Pamela "The Intergalactic Diva" Stonebrooke, she told me that Escamilla wanted to lower her on a rope into the mouth of the cave or cenote where he recorded most of his rods videos with Stonebrooke dressed in a giant, articulated "rod" costume to attract them. – G.B. 2015]

[2] http://www.ufoevidence.org/documents/doc1174.htm

Bigfoot and UFOs
5/09/2009

Bigfoot has got to be one of the most enduring characters of the paranormal world, but in spite of the obvious connections, UFO and cryptozoological researchers tend to avoid each other like cliques at the playground. Nick Redfern and I have both written about the apparent connections between these seemingly disparate phenomena, and on a couple of recent podcasts, I mentioned the Bigfoot/ UFO enigma.

I recently described my adventures at the Dulce Underground Base Conference and how we visited Hoyt Velarde's ranch to film a segment for a DVD. This is what Velarde told us:

-He has found droppings that are not from any known animal in the area.
-He has found footprints and even handprints in soft ground.

-He and others have heard howls and screams.

-He and others have found large "nests" or sleeping areas that are not like those of other animals in the area.

-He's seen it personally on two occasions.

-People have had rocks thrown at them from areas of thickets and dense brush.

It seems that Bigfoot-type creatures are seen regularly and have been in certain areas for centuries, but seem to come and go in some UFO flap areas. A carcass has never been found, although another man I talked with in New Mexico says he's got info on one. He plans to trek out to an undisclosed site and collect the remains for study and presentation. I told him that he had better get multiple scientific analyses and present the actual remains along with all the scientists who do the tests when he's ready to officially announce the find. It appeared that this was what he planned to do. We'll see.

Why do the Bigfoot entities stick to the greener areas? Food? Better cover? So that they're harder to find and track? As far as I know, the only reports of Bigfoot-types in a desert are from the Anza Borrego (CA) area in 1939 and 1969. The Yeti doesn't have a lot of options for hiding in the snowfields, but they seem to do OK keeping out of sight.

Is Bigfoot a flesh-and-blood creature or a paranormal entity? Ghosts sometimes look like living people and occasionally affect the physical environment (footsteps, moving objects.) That may be a clue. It seems that SOMEONE would have found a body by now, unless the creatures bury their dead, and that would involve gravesites which haven't been found either. At present I lean towards the paranormal explanation, i.e. I believe that the creatures exist as physical creatures only occasionally. Our quest for physical evidence in support of a theory may be keeping us from understanding the complete nature of this phenomenon. Other sorts of "evidence" are not generally accepted. Maybe that's where the Bigfoot has us.

P.S. Did a short search and came up with an article entitled "The California Desert Sasquatch" written by Danny Trapp, who founded and ran the Southwestern Bigfoot Research Team from 1977 to 1980. This blows my "no Bigfoots in the desert" idea all to hell. This segment was so intriguing that I had to quote:

> Throughout the 1970's several good reports came from the Palmdale-Lancaster area of the Mojave Desert. Of key interest here was the activity reported on and around Edwards Air Force Base where several military personnel reported to us that they had watched Sasquatches walk through the base at night through starlight scopes. This activity was "Classified" by the military, as it was on the other bases mentioned above. The personnel who reported to us did so anonymously, and further stated that these animals were not reported to the public in order to avoid embarrassment on the government's behalf, since they could not explain what these creatures were, or how they got on the base in such a high security area; admitting this would show a lack of security. The personnel told us that they were told not to fire upon the creatures, just observe. They said the creatures walked through the area nightly, sometimes for several nights in a row, then would

stop appearing. They had also been filmed by surveillance cameras, but the tapes were classified. Edwards has hundreds of miles of underground tunnel systems, and these creatures often found their way into the tunnels as well.[3]

[3] http://www.bigfootencounters.com/creatures/desert.htm

Crop Circles - Hoax Or Hex?
6/21/2007

On my recent trip to New Mexico to help out with the *Mirage Men* feature, co-Producer Mark Pilkington reiterated his contention that all (yes ALL) crop circles are made by humans using boards, rope and surveyor's tools. I am willing to take his expert opinion (he has made hundreds and knows others who have done the same) at face value, and consider it just that. He did add, however that the most simple circles (including the very early ones) may have a paranormal source.

He explained the anomalous aspects of the circles (interwoven stalks, exploded "nodes," electromagnetic effects, etc.) as products of wishful thinking amongst researchers. This I found difficult to agree with, but I can put these aside for now.

One thing he did say was that there are documented examples of strangeness associated with the hoaxed circles. He would not elaborate, but suggested that the act of making the circles might be an act bordering on something like evocational magick. In other words, the creation of the intricate patterns in ripe crops all over England over the past three decades may have had more than the desired effect of making art and befuddling believers–it may have called up something from the "symbolic realm," as I call it.

An essay by Joseph Capp over at *UFO Media Matters*[4] makes this point in another way. He reports (along with a very strange and barely-believable story about a mysterious levitating "metal cone") that circle hoaxers have occasionally seen strange lights in the night sky while working late at night. Have the circle makers opened something up with their outlandish work? Has the worldwide awareness of the supposedly mysterious formations and the certain mark it has made on the collective unconscious actually

awakened something the hoaxers were trying to lampoon? It's this kind of thing that often makes me get up in the morning.

[4] http://ufomedia.blogspot.com/2007/01/do-hoaxers-see-ufos.html

Crop Circle Science
6/27/2008

When the subject of crop circles comes up, there seem to be just two ways to go: they're hoaxes or they're made by aliens. Certainly many intricate designs have been made by people armed with planks and surveying equipment in the dead of night, but some of the strangest things have happened before, during, and after the circles form (or are formed) as well.

Researcher/writer Mark Pilkington insists that all crop circles are made by hoaxers (or artists) like himself and his friends. Even so, he and others have told me about instances when the circle makers have been stopped in their tracks by strange lights, sounds, and sensations. For a couple of years now, I have been content to take Mark's word for it.

Nevertheless, there seems to be a significant percentage of crop circles which exhibit anomalies that can't be easily blamed on people like the two old hoaxers Doug Bower and Dave Chorley or their skulking nocturnal offspring. A woman named Nancy Talbott and her organization, BLT Research Team Inc, have investigated many of these anomalous aspects.

For nearly a decade, BLT has been looking at crop circles from an analytical perspective, using a team of volunteers and scientists who gather samples from the circles and subject them to biological and chemical analysis. They seem to have found evidence that something very weird is going on in at least some cases. Observations include soil changes, microscopic and macroscopic plant structure changes, and effects in seed yields from affected crops (both increase and decrease.) Most of the anomalies appear to be as a result of some sort of heat source, identical to those produced by (among other things) microwave radiation. One researcher has actually claimed to improve crop yields using a patented device that subjects seeds to "organized plasmas."

From their website:

> The BLT Research Team Inc.'s primary focus is crop circle research - the discovery, scientific documentation and evaluation of physical changes induced in plants, soils and other materials at crop circle sites by the energy (or energy system) responsible for creating them and to determine, if possible, from these data the specific nature and source of these energies. Secondly, our intent is to publish these research results in peer-reviewed scientific journals and to disseminate this information to the general public through lectures, mainstream articles and the internet.

In light of their research (and that of others), it becomes increasingly difficult for me to accept that all crop anomalies are produced by stomping on plants with boards. Some as yet unknown force-natural, manmade, or other-may be at work. You may not agree with everything presented by BLT, but their efforts are almost singular in the field of crop circle study. It's certainly better than another analysis of sacred geometry or hypothesizing about alien messages.

Were The Nazca Lines Created By Astral Projection?
6/28/2008

The famous Nazca geoglyphs in Peru have long been considered a puzzle. The mystery of their creation is debatable, although they were clearly constructed to be seen from the air. Their enduring enigma has been revived recently as an integral part of the newest Indiana Jones film.

In his 1968 book, *Chariots of the Gods?***,** Erich Von Daniken claimed that the geometrical lines and figures were left by the ancients as markings for a spaceport for extraterrestrials. While this is a fascinating idea with absolutely no evidence to back it up, there are many other theories about the lines which don't rely on otherworldly origins. Most of the designs can be seen from nearby hills and mountains, although the people who made them would have had to account for the oblique viewpoint, since the designs are proportionally correct when seen from above, a viewpoint not readily available to their ancient designers.

Another theory advanced in the 1970s by Robert Woodmann was that the ancient Nazca artists had invented some sort of hot air balloons to direct construction from above. He fashioned a balloon out of cotton fabric and attached a basket woven by native residents to send a couple of pilots a few hundred feet into the air over the drawings.

Although many speculate about what the lines mean, not many seem to be interested in the "how" of their creation.

Reviled fundamentalist skeptic Joe Nickell (famous for his ridiculous explanation of the Kelly-Hopkinsville and Flatwoods entities as giant owls) conducted an experiment in 1982 and reproduced one of the most famous Nazca figures by using a simplified method of measurements from a central line laid out in a field in Tennessee. If he didn't conveniently gloss over something important, the "condor" was a good reproduction using methods available to anyone with lengths of twine or other reasonable ways of measurement across large areas of land. What appear to be ancient holes, possibly where markers stood (including some with remnants of wooden posts) during construction are in fact located at many points along the drawings and straight lines on the Nazca plain.

But the problem remains: How did the ancient Nazcan people know how accurate they were after the fact for hundreds of the geoglyphs, some apparently not readily visible from the nearby hills?

I was not really surprised to find out that someone had already proposed that the Nazca lines were made by people who had mastered the techniques of out-of-body travel. In his 1988 book *Lines To The Mountain Gods*, archaeologist Evan Hadingham proposed that the Nazcans may have used psychedelic substances for shamanistic journeys over the area to check out their work (at least this is what non-scientific and new-age websites claim–I don't have a copy of the book.) This seems like a far-fetched theory coming from someone who works as a senior science editor for the PBS NOVA series, but the basic idea has merit.

There is a significant amount of literature on the subject of so-called "astral projection" and hundreds of references to people who have seemingly left their physical bodies and traveled to distant locations to observe what is going on at the time. One good reference for this subject is *The Projection of the Astral Body* by Sylvan Muldoon.

Other, similar experiences are documented in the "remote viewing" literature. These journeys out of the body, if viable as a reliable method,

have nothing to do with mind-altering substances, and may be one undiscovered method used by ancient peoples to construct huge artworks on the Earth, which could only be properly seen from the domain of the gods.

CANADIAN FILM MAKER/AUTHOR PAUL KIMBALL, TRYING OUT THE "GOD HELMET"...

UFOs and Earthquake Lights
7/30/2008

The small earthquake here in Los Angeles yesterday got me to thinking about theories connecting UFO sightings (and even abduction episodes) and plate tectonic strain. There were no light phenomena associated with this earthquake, since it occurred at about 11:45 AM and people probably couldn't see any if they were present.

There are plenty of stories about UFOs and other mysterious lights observed before and after earthquakes and volcanic activity, so there seems to be a connection with strain on rocks (especially quartz-bearing or other igneous strata.) There have in fact been studies of this effect in lab settings, but the transient light phenomena observed are small and short-lived.

In 1975, Dr. Michael Persinger published his Tectonic Strain Theory of UFOs, which argued that UFO sightings occurred near fault lines. In the 1980s, he conducted research on the effects of magnetic (and possibly electromagnetic) fields on the human brain. Many of his research subjects had mystical or numinous experiences when using the so-called "God Helmet." Persinger expanded his theory to propose that naturally occurring magnetic fields were responsible for UFO sightings and "alien"

experiences. Of course, this didn't explain everything, and ETH proponents were quick and virulent in their criticism of Persinger, but the theory might be valuable as an adjunct to other ideas about our interaction with the natural environment and the long history of anomalous phenomena.

Paul Deveraux's book *Earthlights* proposed that naturally occurring magnetic fields caused many (if not all) UFO reports that remained unexplained, but left the door open for the possibility that the altered state produced allowed humans to access other realms in the manner of shamans and mystics.

Ghost lights and other anomalous light phenomena also have a history of exhibiting intelligent behavior, which sort of puts a damper on the "nothing but" school of thought. Deveraux, John Keel, and researchers at Project Hessdalen, (who have been studying a recurring light phenomenon that continues in a valley in central Norway) have all written about this. J. Allen Hynek visited Project Hessdalen in the 1970s and declared that something apparently unknown was indeed occurring. I do not know if he included these findings in his theories about UFO origins.

Black-Eyed Kids
2/29/2008

This one went right under my radar. I feel so unhip right now. How could I have missed the horror of the "Black-Eyed Kids" (BEK)? It seems one of the more sinister crazes in the world of the paranormal involves teenaged boys who show up unannounced on doorsteps and next to lone drivers and demand to be let in the house or car. Witnesses describe the "boys" as dressed appropriately for their age, and normal looking, except for the eyes, which are completely black. Have they seen too many horror movies?

This scare is similar to the "phantom social worker" mania that swept the UK and US in the early 1990s, but this phenomenon seems to have appeared later in the decade, starting with a 1998 account by reporter Brian Bethel:

> So, there I was, filling out a check in my car (which was still running) and in a sudden panic over the appearance of two little

boys. I was confused, but an overwhelming sense of fear and unearthliness rushed in nonetheless.

The spokesman smiled, and the sight for some inexplicable reason chilled my blood. I could feel fight-or-flight responses kicking in. Something, I knew instinctually, was not right, but I didn't know what it could possibly be. I rolled down the window very, very slightly and asked "Yes?"

The spokesman smiled again, broader this time. His teeth were very, very white.

"Hey, mister, what's up? We have a problem," he said. His voice was that of a young man, but his diction, quiet calm and … something I still couldn't put my finger on … made my desire to flee even greater. "You see, my friend and I want to see the films, but we forgot our money," he continued. "We need to go to our house to get it. Want to help us out?"…

"C'mon, mister. Let us in. We can't get in your car until you do, you know," the spokesman said soothingly. "Just let us in, and we'll be gone before you know it. We'll go to our mother's house." We locked eyes.

To my horror, I realized my hand had strayed toward the door lock (which was engaged) and was in the process of opening it. I pulled it away, probably a bit too violently. But it did force me to look away from the children.

I turned back. "Er … Um …," I offered weakly and then my mind snapped into sharp focus. For the first time, I noticed their eyes. They were coal black. No pupil. No iris. Just two staring orbs reflecting the red and white light of the marquee. [5]

Bethel put the car in gear and floored it out of the parking lot. The story seems to have started an avalanche of reports. What is unclear is if the original story was true, partially true or if the witness simply let his imagination get away with him. For his part, Bethel swears that it's true, and seems to have let the matter settle as a one-time strange personal encounter. For the record, Bethel, (employed by the Abeliene TX, ***Reporter-News***) has also written well-balanced stories on chemtrail conspiracy advocates as well as normal assignments like a report on lower gas prices.

What's going on here? Is it an example of an urban legend run wild? Are there actually etheric, spooky-looking kids terrorizing innocent grownups? It's interesting to note that many accounts state that the kids, while being very insistent, also say that they cannot enter without permission from the witness. This of course taps into folklore about vampires and other evil beings that must be invited before they can commence their dirty work. It also calls to mind rituals which summon elementals or other spirits for magical work, often while the magician is protected inside a circle of symbols or substances to protect themselves.

The tales also tap into alien lore with shades of Men In Black skulking around the porches of UFO witnesses, as well as the obvious detail of black eyes. I am sure that some will say that these BEK stories are due to human-alien hybrids doing the bidding of their evil ET masters. In any case, the stories are rife with symbolism and ready fodder for horror writers and filmmakers.

Of course, now I've let a fortune in residuals pass me by.

[5] http://blackeyedkids.com/original.html

Like many of you, I have always been interested in ghosts and hauntings. This was written sometime after the publication of my book Weird California*, and probably for a magazine or newspaper that never used it. It sees the light of day here for the first time.*

Hauntings and Curses Of California

Faced with an unequivocal shiver down the spine in a dark old house at night, even a hard-nosed skeptic might admit to the possibility of ghosts and hauntings. The evidence contained in folklore, history and modern research is decidedly on the side of a truly real phenomenon. In popular culture, the disembodied spirit has come a long way from the flapping winding-sheets of Halloween and the cheap dime novel. Paranormal researchers and even Hollywood have given the ghost a decidedly human aspect, and most people realize that the actual sight of one may often be indistinguishable from a living person, except when it walks through a wall or disappears before our eyes.

Hauntings do not last forever, according to California author, historian and ghost hunter Richard Senate. “They may last for weeks or years, but they appear to have a limited lifespan, just like people” he says. Some may even go on for hundreds of years, but eventually the phenomena seem to fade away. Various locations in the golden state have very active ghostly manifestations reported every year.

Ventura’s famed Olivas Adobe was built in 1851 during the Spanish colonial period as a home and headquarters for a sprawling ranchero owned by the wealthy Raimundo Olivas and his family. A robbery and multiple murder in 1855 may have been the catalyst for apparitions and other disturbances which are seen to this day. Visitors most often report a female figure clad in an ornate black dress walking the upper porch. Invisible footsteps creak on the original floorboards, and rocking chairs are seen to tilt back and forth. Pictures often reveal spectral figures staring in the windows, especially at night.

One of the cases in Senate’s files may have included a literal “time window.” Senate’s wife, who is a psychic sensitive, accompanied him to look at a century-old house in Ventura, on the central coast of California. A married couple had recently bought the home. They were concerned about strange happenings and wanted Senate to investigate.

The husband claimed that he was awakened one night by moonlight streaming through an open window. He got up to close the drapes, but his hands went through the curtains and he suddenly realized that there was no window in that part of the upstairs bedroom. The window suddenly disappeared as he drew back his hands.

When Senate and his wife Debbie arrived, she went to the room to try and find the source for the disturbances. Debbie Senate saw the window and in a possibly unlucky moment of inspiration, felt moved to have a look through it. She asked two friends (who also claimed to see the window) hold her hands as she leaned out. What she saw, Senate recalls was: “a Model T Ford, wooden sidewalks, a little girl skipping rope and what looked like a sawmill.” She later said that it looked as if the colors were muted or sepia-toned as in an old photograph, and the whole scene was “sort of flat” or not as three-dimensional as one would expect. Just as she was pulled back into the room, the window quickly “dematerialized.” She was immediately disoriented and nauseous. “I don’t know what would have happened if she’d stayed outside” says Senate.

If Debbie Senate had done so, she might have been trapped "between moments" sometime in the early 20th century, which sounds like a particularly disturbing *Twilight Zone* episode, or she might have found herself on the roof of the house in the present, wondering what had happened. Senate looked in the historical records and found that there had in fact been a sawmill located approximately where his wife had seen it from the strange time-traveling window. Recent developments in theoretical physics point to the possibility that time is partly a human convention, and that a state of "everywhen" may be closer to the true nature of reality.

In 2006, while writing an entry for the book *Weird California*, the San Diego Historical Society generously arranged for a private tour of the "Villa Montezuma" in San Diego. "Greg," who met me at the door, opened up the 120-year-old Victorian mansion and told of original owner Jesse Shepard's wish to make his home a haven for spiritualist philosophy. The Spiritualist movement of the 19th century claimed to make contact with the deceased, and Shepard held many séances there, as well as confounding and delighting his many guests with his claim of channeling the spirits of famous composers who played their compositions thorough his hands.

Shepard only lived in the house for one year before moving to Europe, but every owner since has claimed to hear piano music, and seeing or hearing Shepard or others walking on the creaky floors or down the ornate staircase. Neighborhood children have also occasionally glimpsed an old woman staring down at them from one of the upper windows while they played in the street in front of the house.

When I called up the Historical Society to ask for Greg's surname to complete my article, the secretary said that they had never had anyone by that name in their organization, much less conducted tours of the Villa Montezuma. It is strange that he shared my first name, which also made it easy to remember. Did I hallucinate that entire afternoon? Greg's handshake felt real, and he answered all my questions, even the uncomfortable ones about a string of hired caretakers who he said "went funny in the head" after a few months' residence. Perhaps the Villa is cursed as well.

Wikipedia defines the modern definition of a curse as "any manner of adversity thought to be inflicted by any supernatural power (such as a spell, a prayer, an imprecation, an execration, magic, witchcraft, a god, a natural force, or a spirit.)" The curse can be visited on a person, place or thing.

The Pacheco Pass in Santa Clara County is the location of one of the deadliest stretches of highway in the nation. The part of highway 152 that connects the more well-traveled 101 and 5 highways has been the scene of many unexplained incidents of driving rage and roadside fistfights. Writing on the weird influence of the area in his 1988 book *Mysterious California*, author Mike Marinacci wrote, "It seemed as if people were afraid of the pass and wanted to get out as quickly as possible, back to the safety of the big interstates." He also noted that the area was the scene of some of the most bloody battles between Native Americans and settlers in the 19th century, and that the Pacheco may have taken a "negative emotional and spiritual residue" from its violent past.

Some hauntings may be the result of curses, as in the more frightening cases of possible spirit activity that involve events and apparitions that attempt to harm the living, or drive them out of "their" place. Events range from a simple feeling of an evil presence to sightings of moving, nebulous shapes both indoors and out that appear "blacker than the blackest night," to actual attempts to hurt and even assault the unlucky witnesses.

One of the most famous and unsettling cases of demonic-type events was the "Entity" haunting of 1974, primarily due to a movie of the same name that was released in 1981. Two graduate psychology students from UCLA met a woman who claimed that a violent ghost was making her life hell and desperately asked for their help. Doris Bither told them that an evil presence was continually beating and sexually assaulting her late at night. Since Barry Taff and Kerry Gaynor were specializing in, of all things, ghost hunting, they decided to check out the woman's story, even though they privately joked that she was probably crazy.

They weren't laughing a few weeks later when they stood talking in her kitchen as a cupboard door opened and a heavy skillet flew out and landed a few feet away. Pictures were taken of small orbs of light that moved around the house, but nothing showed up on film. However, when Bither told them that the entity was right in front of her, Gaynor snapped another photo, which later showed something blurring and partially obscuring her face.

Intrigued, Taff and Gaynor returned to the Culver City house with more equipment and a group of professional photographers. After they gathered in Bither's bedroom, she asked the spirit to show itself. Green balls of light began to fly around the room. In one famous photo, one of the lights is seen flying by Bither's head. She then asked the figure to show itself. The

witnesses watched dumbfounded as a greenish-white form took shape in front of her.

They all agreed later that the form appeared male and muscular. No photos have come to light of this manifestation, however. Gaynor later remarked “We saw the head take shape and then the shoulders. The light extended down to the ground until it became a full humanoid figure of greenish-white light. Then it just vanished, almost as if somebody pulled the plug. It didn't fade away. It just vanished. Everybody was completely in awe and silent as we watched this happen.”

At a later date, Bither’s son tried to protect his mother as she experienced another nighttime attack. As he came through her bedroom door, we was struck violently in the head and thrown back against a wall, breaking his arm. In a bizarre coincidence, one of the crew working on the Hollywood film about the haunting broke his arm while working on a scene based on the incident. Bither said that there were actually three entities involved in the assaults. Two smaller ones held her down while the larger one raped and/ or beat her.

Finally, in an attempt to escape the horror of their situation, Bither and her son moved to five different homes, and finally out of the state. As in other cases of this type, the phenomenon followed them, but like poltergeist incidents, eventually diminished and finally ended about two years after it began. It could be said that either Bither or her original home was cursed, but no one to date has followed up on this line of inquiry.

The case has parallels with the famous Bell Witch story from Tennessee, which lasted from 1817 to 1840. The entire Bell family was involved with a spirit who talked out loud to the family and visitors, struck family members, prevented the marriage of one of the Bell children, and may have caused the death of John Bell, the family patriarch. Witnesses at John Bell’s funeral said that the spirit emitted evil laughter as the priest tried to conduct his rites.

A slightly more recent case comes from the San Pedro area (which was also investigated by Taff) involved poltergeist phenomena and the apparent attempted murder of one of the investigators. A woman named Jackie Hernandez contacted Taff in 1989 to report a series of unexplained and disturbing events in her home. Unlike the Doris Bither case, the happenings not only followed her, but plagued subsequent owners of the house as well.

During the course of investigation by Taff and videotaping by documentary director Barry Conrad, strange odors permeated the rooms, a sticky substance oozed out of the walls, and Taff and others observed objects flying off of shelves and out of cabinets. As photographer Jeff Wheatcraft searched the attic for the source of some unexplained sounds, he felt a something wrap around his neck and stumbled for the attic door. His amazed companions saw a length of clothesline hanging from his shoulders. An assistant had to help Wheatcraft untangle himself from the rope, which was tied to a nail from one of the rafters. Either Wheatcraft was willing to risk his life for the sake of a prank, or something sinister was not happy with the outside attention.

Hernandez also reported that something looking like a "decaying old man" appeared in her children's bedroom. The macabre entity apparently followed her family to their new house in a remote area of the Sierra Nevada foothills, where neighbors also saw it.

To Conrad's horror, the spirit eventually followed him and Wheatcraft home, turning on a gas stove, placing a camera tripod on a bed, and for good measure, they found two pairs of scissors under each pillow.

Conrad relates his story of a séance that ended in a particularly gruesome way:

> "ARE YOU REALLY A GHOST?" I asked it. The planchette would repeatedly indicate "YES" all the while the table began to shake violently beneath the board. "HOW MANY GHOSTS RESIDE AMONG THE LIVING?" Jackie queried as she quickly began taking notes of the session. A cryptic response immediately followed: "PHANTOMS FILL THE SKIES AROUND YOU!" Again, the table shook violently and it was at this point that our chairs vibrated too.
>
> IS THERE ANYONE IN THIS ROOM THAT YOU HATE?" Immediately, the planchette rapidly spelled out four letters "J-E-F-F". And at that instant, all doubts of Jeff's veracity during the hanging incident would be forever erased. For in a furious few seconds, Jeff and chair were levitated off the floor and hurled backwards into the trailer wall! The impact was so great that the entire trailer shook as Jeff toppled to the floor, unconscious.

Conrad wrote a book about this singular case, entitled *An Unknown Encounter*, [This was published in 2009 and is still in print as of 2015.]

While some of the events in these "ghost stories" may not be all true, the history of hauntings reveals that some awfully creepy things have been documented for as long as people have been able to record their experiences.

Unlike UFOs, which appear on no set schedule and in no permanent locations, many haunted places can be staked out for events that may be recorded and examined. Ghosts speak to our hopes about survival of death. Perhaps our individuality and what is loosely called the "soul" merely makes its way back to a non space/ time realm when it's done looking over the world, and occasionally misses the touch of things, the smell of perfume, and other advantages of a physical body, or there may be scores left to settle.

Another theory holds that ghostly happenings appear in "windows" or "slips" in time. In other words, some areas seem to have to ability to allow some witnesses to see into events exactly as they happened in the past. Some researchers also contend that certain places may retain "memories" of the past, acting as a sort of tape recorder, which is played back over and over again for startled visitors.

Perhaps the true nature of hauntings is a combination of all these things, and while ghostly figures may appear on film and video, and disembodied voices may speak in hushed tones in a phenomenon dubbed "Electronic Voice Phenomena" (EVP), the best instrument for experiencing ghosts may ultimately be the human nervous system.

6 - Everybody Has One: Opinions

UFOmystic was supposed to be light reading with breezy posts about aliens, but for some reason, I really got obsessed and poured a lot of thought into it. As a result, after almost three years, I had almost run out of things to say. My opinions haven't changed that much since writing these pieces, and the original composition of them actually helped me through a lot of disparate and sometimes opposing thoughts. The entries are from December of 2006 to early 2009. Three are not from UFOmystic and two of those appear for the first time: The first was a rant against UFO research groups and personalities ("The Case Of The Unrepentant UFO Researchers") which I wrote in 2002. The second ("Intermediatism Is Bliss") was written for the League Of Western Fortean Intermediatists (LOWFI) website. And the last was a response to a dumb review of my book Project Beta*, which ends this chapter.*

Why Should Anyone Be Interested In UFOs?
4/19/2007

Actually, there isn't really any obvious reason to care about the UFO subject, which is why most people don't, at least not very much. Only a small percentage of the population know about the most famous cases, and usually just the most recent ones. What is really interesting though, is that almost anyone perks up when the subject is mentioned in a relaxed setting. Why is this?

One good reason is that UFOs speak to the maverick that lives in the back of most of our minds. They are outside every ontological barbed-wire fence that the authorities have staked around our psyche. Along that fence are guard towers filled with fundamentalist skeptics, most academics, some of the news media, and others who consider themselves no-nonsense types. When something truly unexplained flies over our heads (or digs under the fence) we are told to laugh or look away. No one with a working brain really likes to be told what to think, so some of us look and wonder. The UFOs (and whatever causes them) are cheerleaders urging us along an intellectual evolutionary path. At least, that's what I like to think.

There are very few other things in our existence that have the power to do this. Some esoteric spiritual philosophies, such as Zen Buddhism, Western Occultism and Sufism offer a chance to look inward for answers. Another path that offers this in a quick and sometimes dangerous way are psychotropic/ psychedelic drugs. Some use a combination of these to seek personal truth.

The study of UFOs, if taken in its entirety, produces some of the same results. An endless cataloging of cases for its own sake is little more than hobbyist pornography, but looking deeper for patterns and trends sometimes opens the door to not only a deeper appreciation for the subject, but a peek from the outside of our own current views of existence and its obvious limitations. Why can't we agree on what causes UFO sightings, or what controls the phenomenon? A few authors have already pointed out that there is little or no evidence that UFOs are interplanetary craft piloted by aliens from other star systems. Still, the hardcore believers continue to dance to this enticing tune.

What is interesting is the myriad of other possibilities. This opens up a whole Pandora's box (from the fundamentalist skeptic point of view) of forbidden ideas: time travel, manifested thoughtforms, apparently unknowable existences, intelligences other than corporeal humanity, etc. What these ideas all have in common is that there is currently no way to measure them or "prove" their claim to existence. It seems that the UFOs are urging us along–trying to open new pathways in our species' tunnel vision.

When some of these new ideas and viewpoints take hold, it is almost certain that the intelligence behind the UFOs will change its modus operandi yet again, and always remain beyond the current understanding. Almost 60 years after Kenneth Arnold saw those silvery thingies skipping above the peaks of the Cascades, most people are still thinking along the same "aliens from other planets" path. There are a few (like John Keel, Jacques Vallée, Whitley Strieber, Michio Kaku, Gregory Little, Keith Thompson etc.) who have listened to the UFOnauts and more importantly to their presently inscrutable message.

Sometime in the future, when the old guard dies out and cutting-edge science shows us incontrovertible evidence that "unbelievable" things are possible, we will realize some of the things that the UFOs have been whispering in our ears for millennia. The world will change in spite of neanderthals like James Randi and Penn and Teller. Most people like new ideas. They're exciting and affirm that we're here for more than just a few decades of meaningless toil or materialistic acquisition.

Try that theory at your next party.

Ufology: What's The Point?
2/14/2007

In his shocking 1989 speech to the Mutual UFO Network conference, Bill Moore asked an important question: "What are all of you going to do if we find out what UFOs are?"

In a recent interview, radio host Tim Binnall pointed out that Ufologists often speak on and write about cases and causes, but almost never address the reasons that they are involved in the field in the first place. It's an important question.

Of course most will quickly answer that they want to find the "truth" and expose this to the public. As Nick Redfern and I have argued, "truth" may not be what everyone is yelling about. If you want to prove something to those who are not interested in UFOs, the evidence presented is not very compelling. The main reason for this is that most people don't really care about something unless it has some relevance to their everyday lives. UFOs are in a mental box on the back shelf.

Let's say we do find out that aliens are from other planets and are coming here in spacecraft. What difference does that make to the population at large? The aliens aren't going to solve our problems, or they would have done that by now. The major religions (Catholicism in particular) have already stated that it wouldn't change their dogmas very much. Anything weirder, such as cryptoterrestrials, interdimensional time travelers or manifested thoughtforms would require too much explanation to those not interested in the first place–"dead on the launchpad' as William Burroughs once said.

Of course the governments of the world would state that they knew about this alien thing all along, but didn't want to frighten the public with information for which they weren't prepared. Ufology would suddenly be a non-issue. At that point, the media would hardly be interested in Ufologists hollering "I told you so," and the fifty-odd years of clamor over a coverup would be forgotten in an instant. What would Ufology do then? Many would have to find another way to get their names in the paper or their faces on TV. The few who are in it for more altruistic or spiritual reasons would carry on in the new paradigm, for the new questions raised by this revelation would be just as interesting. How do I feel about this? How does it change my worldview? How can I access the non-human "other" myself? After the initial shock, life would go on pretty much as it had before.

We don't need to know that extraterrestrials exist and may be interacting with us from time to time to carry on with our lives. It's an interesting thought, and fun to play with, but it doesn't pay the bills or solve our problems. This is how most people would react, I think.

If we accept his theory, Whitley Strieber said that the visitors are not here to invade the planet. Their plan seems more like a subtle PR campaign, seeded to a few thousand individuals. What those people do with their revelations is what counts–the way they integrate it into their lives and the lives of others, and this is something the rank-and-file of Ufology do not

seem to like or understand. If everyone had access to the experience, there would be no need for self-appointed gatekeepers. It would do little to support the cults of personality that have grown around certain celebrities, and that's bad for the ego as well as bad business.

How Should Ufology Be Changed?
3/06/2007

I recently asked why Ufology exists. It was a negative essay, so it should be balanced with something positive, or potentially positive.

First, we look to those on whose shoulders we stand, but have been generally ignored because their ideas cannot be reduced to sound bites, or don't fit comfortably with the extraterrestrial hypothesis (ETH.) In the 1960s, Jacques Vallée suggested that the UFO and alien idea had been with us for centuries, except that the lights in the sky used to be called "miracles," and the denizens who stepped out of them were "angels" or "fairies" or "demons." John Keel went on another tangent and theorized that the "ultraterrestrials" were playing a cosmic joke on mankind in order to further a hidden and possibly inscrutable agenda. Many others (such as Albert Bender, Meade Layne, and a host of contactees) had suggested some of these same ideas in the 1950s.

These valuable additions to the study of UFOs have generally been ignored because of the mass hallucination that all things in the sky which cannot be explained by normal means MUST be aliens from outer space. Almost all theorizing on the subject has been hamstrung by this assumption. Is it because it's convenient? Are people just lazy? Are they scared to think about alternate ideas of reality? I believe the answer is "D: All of the above."

Unfortunately, the only way to get your ideas heard in public is to start from the ETH. Anything else merely gets a dumb stare. I think that Ufologists are looked at by many as a subset of *Star Trek* fans, or worse, at least by the media and academics who matter in the court of public opinion. Changing this image is a tall order.

The best way to do this may be to get those media people and bearded professors to first accept that there is something other than human that has been communicating with us since before recorded history. Whether it's

"aliens" or something else, it seems that all the rest of the phenomenon follows from this idea. The ETH is so ingrained in the popular consciousness that it will take many years for this to happen.

Multi-millionaire Web pioneer Joe Firmage and real estate magnate Robert Bigelow have both donated many thousands of dollars to a few open-minded scientists who dare to think that science is capable of understanding the UFO phenomena. This was a step in the right direction, since this is a good way to get the NOVA/Discovery Channel/high-school-science-hypnotized public to sit up and take notice that this is not merely a subject for middle-aged overweight males. The Search For Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI), for all their problems, gives the subject a higher visibility as well.

Since most people routinely ignore the quibbles, squabbles and scribbles of the UFO research community, it doesn't make much difference in the bigger picture of public awareness, at least any more than it has in the past. I daresay a lot of people readily accept that UFOs exist as a real phenomenon. Therefore, Ufology's #1 job has been accomplished!

Maybe it's time to start moving the field in a direction that embraces more than the ET idea. As many researchers have pointed out, the phenomenon includes much more than lights in the sky and abductions. Many of these issues involve concepts of occultism, the paranormal, cryptozoology, psychic functioning, philosophy, religion and the history and origins of the human race. The condensing of these ideas into something intellectually digestible to most people may be almost impossible, and would involve a sea change in public opinion and thinking.

Perhaps Ufology can help foster a new view of the universe and our place in it, acknowledging the idea that all is one, and that we are intimately connected to that which we see as "extraterrestrial," and indeed, we have always been.

Almost everyone in the UFO biz gets to the point where they say, "That's it." My first crisis of faith came in 2002, before Project Beta *was written and UFOmystic.com had started its run. The national Mutual UFO Network (MUFON) meeting was held about 50 miles from my home, so I went for a visit. Among the speakers was Steven Greer.*

I first saw Greer at a local MUFON meeting in 1987, when he was a mild-mannered emergency room physician who quietly suggested that there might be a way to call down UFOs. There were about 10 people at the meeting. Fifteen years later, he was speaking to crowds of several hundred and starting to exhibit the sort of evangelical fervor for which he is now famous.

I sat down to listen to him with Pamela "The Intergalactic Diva" Stonebrooke (who was a close friend of mine at the time) and the late abduction researcher Dr. John Mack. During Greer's speech, I looked over at Mack, who was rolling his eyes in exasperation. He left before the presentation was over, saying "I've got better things to do." I thought, "This is not my beautiful MUFON!"

The article was written as a private rant and was never really intended for publication. Until now.

When Will They Ever Learn? The Strange Case of the Unrepentant UFO Researchers
3/27/2002

There is no question about when the saucer bug bit me. Each week, from the time I was about five years old until I found better things to do, like drink and try to get laid, my dad took me and my sis to the local library. He took us there with no other admonition than to take out as many books as we thought we could finish in a week. At about age 10, I had exhausted the Dewey Decimal section for "UFOs and Paranormal," and moved on to greener pastures at another neighborhood library.

The strange story of Barney and Betty Hill pulled my imagination like taffy. This couple had been taken for "Two Hours Aboard A UFO" and told their story to a Boston psychologist. Not only was it fantastic, it was also REAL, or as real as my prepubescent mind wanted it to be. I still think it was "real," with the appropriate quote marks.

And who could surpass the strange case of Antonio Villas-Boas, who was kind of non-forcibly raped by a red-haired space babe while plowing the back forty on his family's Brazilian farm in 1957? Apart from the usual schoolyard innuendoes, this was one of my introductions to the frightening mysteries of sex. This may be one of the reasons that I never got many dates. In any case, weirdness had to take a backseat to growing up until I

reached the age of about 25, but at that point, I still pretty much believed what I was told or read.

That's when I met Bill Moore and the world changed.

In 1989, he was ready to tell the story of his involvement with the hitherto underreported shenanigans of the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI.) A few weeks before the national Mutual UFO Network Convention, he said "I'm going to tell them something that will stand the UFO community on its head." He wasn't kidding. When he took the stage in the blistering Las Vegas midsummer, his words burned just about all the bridges he had to his fellow researchers and inflicted collateral damage on much of the rest. In the now familiar story he confessed to cooperating with the AFOSI to keep tabs on saucer researcher Paul Bennewitz and watch as his fantasies, encouraged by the spies, slowly drove him nuts. Moore's part of the faustian bargain netted him valuable material for his books and articles, and an inside view of how the US government commits counterintelligence against its citizens. He told the assembled insiders just how outside they were in the UFO info loop, and warned them not to trust everything they heard from government sources. This might be applied to Moore as well, and he admitted it.

Leaving the well-worn ethics questions for now, we may ask, "What have UFO groups and researchers done to wise up to the bullshit since 1989?" Well, with a few exceptions… not much really. The naiveté of these ego junkies is still preyed upon by domestic intel interests, and those out for fame or the fast buck. The sorry state of things at present is not due simply to 9/11 fallout. The handbasket was on the express special to hell long before that.

So, this is a warning, and perhaps a bit of an "I'm through with you" (at least until something piques my interest again.)

Who speaks for the UFO community now? Certainly not Steven "Release The Files" Greer. At the last MUFON conclave in Southern Cali, he sounded just like an evangelist–strutting about the stage and pausing for applause every three or four sentences, like a Bible-belt preacher. The difference was that the things he was rallying for don't really concern a large percentage of the population. Now, I'm the last one cheering for "respectability" in the saucer field, but to me, he looked even sillier than those Operation Right To Know people from the late '80s, who marched in front of the White House with signs that read "RELEASE THE UFO

FILES!" Isn't he supposed to be reaching out to the unwashed? Preaching to the choir is not the way to get a message out on a subject that's pretty strange for the general public, unless you're trying to break into inadvertent standup comedy.

Maybe the "disclosure" problem was cornered by Jack Nicholson's character in *A Few Good Men*, when he hollered, "YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE TRUTH!!"

As things become more (and paradoxically less) clear in the UFO/ spook dynamic, it looks like the Federal/ military/ industrial complex knows not much more about paranormal and otherworldly weirdness than the private investigators. Why is it that the UFO groups have been infiltrated from the beginning? At first, it was the possibility that nasty reds and subversives were fomenting revolution under the guise of advice from benevolent space brothers, and perhaps there were a few things the power structure could soak up from the saucer clubs that they couldn't get on their own. But these days, the largest (and shrinking) private study group in the world (MUFON again) hasn't been pushing the "government secrecy" issue very much, in favor of more tales of alien abduction and other nocturnal intrusions. Did the government lose interest in the subject? Probably not. Perhaps the reason is that the civilian groups no longer have anything to say that "those in the know" don't know already.

In any case, Greer goes on his merry way talkin' the gospel and picking up addle-headed acolytes on the way. Doesn't he know that intel types not only lie their compartmentalized asses off, the retired military dudes he relies on so heavily for "insider info" don't seem to have ever been in the loop on anything. This (like him, and it, or not) was what Bill Moore was trying to get across to his brothers and sisters. Other seekers in the shadows rely on government contacts, not realizing that they aren't going to learn anything that their handlers don't want them to, and must rely on patience and careful note taking in order to see patterns and tributaries that may take years to reveal themselves.

One researcher that seems to be treading this lonely path is Californian Randy Koppang. At the 1999 Laughlin UFO conclave, he and abductee Melinda Leslie announced that they had uncovered a quasi-governmental group (probably now defunct) calling itself the Advanced Theoretical Physics Working Group. The stated raison d'etre for the ATPWG was to "plan and set policy regarding the UFO issue." The group allegedly

included such members as physicist/ parapsychological researcher Dr. Hal Puthoff and possibly our old and respected friend Jacques Vallée. One member who has actually admitted to his participation is the Grey Ghost himself, Col. John Alexander. The only other participant who has acknowledged his membership was Ed Dames, and with these two former spooks calling the shots, who can ever know the ultimate truth of the matter? Koppang and associates quietly plod on, maybe trying to find answers that will thoroughly satisfy them and their harshest critics instead of quickly, loudly, and vociferously claiming some sort of pyrrhic victory.

Was Col. Phillip Corso (author of the tell-all book *The Day After Roswell*) ever briefed in on the "big secret?" Probably not. He was told what he needed to know. And so is most of the new wave of UFO research, sitting at the bottom of the UFO info food chain. Just like the rest of us. Sometimes I wish I could just forget it all and start over again, bushwhacking my way through the books at the local library, but you can't go home again. At least, not without some heavy psychedelics and an MKULTRA-trained therapist.

Think outside the box. Maybe we've ALL been Paul Bennewitz'ed for the last 20 years.

Inconvenient Facts About Abductions
12/22/2006

Here we have the last straw in my credibility with the "believers." This will separate those who are serious from the dogmatic lapdogs.

In the course of researching an article, I stumbled upon an essay at the Committee For The Scientific Investigation of Claims Of The Paranormal (CSICOP) site written by Martin Kottmeyer. Entitled "Eyes That Spoke," it discussed the Barney and Betty Hill abduction case and the effects of pop culture.

Kottmeyer argues that the broadcast of "The Bellero Shield" episode of the *Outer Limits* television series may have been the source for the Hill's description of their suspected alien captors. Although the incident occurred on September 20, 1961, the Hills did not seek help from psychologist Dr. Benjamin Simon until December of 1963. "The Bellero Shield" first aired

on September 10, 1964. Barney Hill first described the aliens' "wraparound eyes" in a hypnotic session on September 22, 1964.

Of course, while Kottmeyer merely suggests that the influence of the show may have had a strong influence on the Hill's recall, and many subsequent abduction accounts, most likely CSICOP gleefully published the piece with the idea that this "solved" ALL abduction stories. I could not disagree more, but the inconvenient facts that Kottmeyer discusses point in the direction of a serious issue at the center of abductions. I daresay the book about the Hill case (*The Interrupted Journey*) has been digested and deeply ingrained in the minds of all UFO researchers who engage in hypnotic regression with supposed abductees. There is almost no way that anyone who is interested in the subject can put this template out of their minds when investigating extra-human encounters. As one researcher (psychologist Dr. Mario Pazzaglini–who was very sympathetic to the issue) told me, "Many of these people have little respect for or knowledge of the unconscious."

Alien from *Outer Limits* episode

Drawing by Barney Hill from hypnosis session

What may have occurred is that the influence of this particular episode and its subsequent dissemination in the abduction literature provided researchers and abductees with a convenient template for their experiences, whatever they were (and are.) I am reasonably sure that many hundreds, if not thousands of people may be latching on to this image to come to terms with something completely outside of their experience, if only to have a place to put it in their minds, and come to some sort of peace with it. For the "aliens'" part, it may be just fine with them that we do this. Perhaps they even influenced the minds of the creative people on the show, if only passively.

By the way, when I was a kid, this episode scared the living crap out of me for weeks after I saw it on a rerun!

A UFO Report In Every Crowd
2/16/2007

Has anyone else noticed this?

Bring up the UFO subject at a party, or in any informal conversation, and you are bound to have at least one person who will admit to at least some kind of sighting of an unexplained aircraft. A couple of weeks ago, I was debating the "reality" of UFOs with a pilot, and another quietly said that he had seen a "metallic globe" while flying along the California coast at about 5000 feet. He said that he passed it, but when he turned around for a better look, it flew away at a speed that he could not match (he was in an experimental propeller-driven ultralight aircraft.)

Yesterday, someone admitted to me that if he saw a UFO, he would be frightened. I said that there was no particular reason to be scared of UFOs. "I don't mean scared of the sight of it" he said, and trailed off. I realized what he meant: The simple acknowledgment that there IS something that doesn't fit in our mental categories would upset many people's ordered view of things.

Maybe the "Ufology: What's The Point?" piece was a little hasty! Perhaps there WOULD be some sort of widespread spiritual or philosophical emergency if it was revealed that "we are not alone." I still believe, however, that when everyone realized that things were pretty much

the same, that they would accept the fact, and incorporate it. As someone once told me "People can get used to anything, even bombs falling around them."

Perhaps the best goal of Ufology might be to get people to entertain the idea that we share this world with another intelligence which is not human. There can be little doubt (at least in my mind) that this is the case.

Penn & Teller – Masters Of Deception
3/20/2007

In my part time work in the post-production industry, I often get a chance to see soon-to-be released T.V. shows and films, but most of the time, it's re-runs. This week, for instance, I saw a couple of old episodes of the Penn & Teller Showtime trainwreck entitled *Bullshit!* The duo, who have been performing magicians for decades now, somehow felt compelled to bring their philosophical beliefs to the small screen. In 1994, before they began their residence in Las Vegas, I was entertained and fascinated by their stage show. They're consummate showmen and put on a top-notch act. I even have a copy of their 1989 book *Cruel Tricks For Dear Friends*, and it's a riot.

Unfortunately, their hero is aging magician James Randi. Randi used to be on the governing board of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP), until he made one too many statements about psychics that had nothing to do with investigating their claims, and were beginning to bury CSICOP under a mountain of libel suits. He was given his walking papers by the group many years ago. Taking the sometimes unscientific methods of CSICOP one step further, Penn & Teller (P&T) use their pay-tv pulpit to smear and denigrate those who dare to dabble in the fields of Ufology, cryptozoology, remote viewing, and other arcane areas. To be sure, there are many charlatans, liars, addle-headed believers and worse in these fields of inquiry, and P&T are right to point them out for ridicule.

These magicians have been deceiving people for most of their lives–it's part of their act and they revel in it. The problem with this attitude is that P&T assume that anyone who is trying to promote or investigate subjects outside the realm of 19th century science is doing the same thing. Like the

high priests of CSICOP, their minds are made up before the study begins. They make a small show of applying the scientific method that they worship, but the program is basically an excuse to laugh at those who are assumed to be less sophisticated and intelligent than the hosts or the viewing audience.

The episode I happened to see this week actually featured our friend Nick Redfern poking around a haunted house with a couple of other "ghost hunters" while Penn Jillette (the member of the duo who speaks) makes fun of just about everything they say. My guess is that if either P or T actually saw a ghost, they would either assume that someone was playing a trick on them, or it would quickly be filed away in their minds as a non-event.

Possibly the most egregious example of their duplicity is the episode that was taped during the 2003 Bay Area UFO Conference for a show on alien abductions. I have been told by those who attended that conclave that the producers of *Bullshit!* told the organizers that they were there to do a serious program on UFOs for Showtime. Everyone who appeared on camera signed a release with this assumption. Barbara Lamb, a licensed mental-health professional who does hypnotic regressions with supposed abductees was called (if I remember correctly) a "money-grubbing old bitch" in a voice-over by Jillette. Although I disagree with the vast majority of researchers who use regression to uncover possible memories of UFO encounters, referring to Lamb (whom I know as a sincere and caring person) as a "bitch" is a bit out of line.

In the shows I've seen, the hosts never appear on camera with the subjects of their wrath. Why is this? Are they afraid to engage in a straight debate, (many of which they would probably "win") or are they more like small boys who leave a flaming paper bag full of dog crap on someone's doorstep, ring the bell, and run?

The usual modus operandi that the producers (and hosts) of *Bullshit!* have exhibited is to present the most outlandish and ridiculous proponents of whatever it is they have set their sights, and present it as the whole of the phenomenon being examined. This is why I refer to it as the "Shooting Fish In A Barrel Show." These people are not educating us, they are dumbing us down, along with many of the paranormal TV programs they rail against. "Paranormal" means "outside of the normal," and the "normal" has been changing for thousands of years. Why the evolution of thought and science should come to a reverent halt with our generation is beyond me.

Postscript: One thing I found very interesting in their program on ESP was a short clip of remote viewing pioneer Dr. Russell Targ. To my disbelief, he appeared on screen for a few seconds and said something to the effect of "I don't want to say anything, because you'll edit my words to make me look bad."

UFO Fact vs. UFO Theory
4/28/2007

There has always been an argument between Ufologists and fundamentalist skeptics about the existence of UFOs. This simple dichotomy hides a thorny ontological bramble of loaded terms and ideas. The first question usually asked of anyone who is interested in the subject is "Do you believe in UFOs?" My answer is "I believe that as-yet unexplained things are occasionally seen in the sky."

There are a variety of responses to this answer. Our culture demands certainty, even if it is based on flawed reasoning, so many are vaguely frustrated by this response. Any interest in the subject is almost automatically translated into belief in aliens from other planets. The transformation of this image of Ufology may be one of the best goals that our generation can hope to achieve.

Unfortunately, the sound-bite nature of media exposure does not easily allow anyone to explain that there should be a crisis of definition brewing amongst UFO researchers. Many of those who appear on TV and in print articles don't even point out that the "U" stands for "unidentified." Unidentified does not mean aliens. Who is going to produce the definitive documentary with that title? Perhaps Paul Kimball could take a shot at it. The "UFO" acronym does a disservice to many other aspects of the phenomenon, such as abductions, altered states of mind, MIBs and intentional manifestations.

There are very few facts associated with the study of UFOs, at least facts that can be proven in the way most people will accept them. We have no control over when or where witnesses will see strange lights in the sky or experience other anomalous episodes associated with them. This places Ufology outside of the discipline of classic science, which demands controlled repeatability. Perhaps the word "Ufology" should be trashed! A

more inclusive designation might be “Theoretical Anomalistics,” but unfortunately, we are stuck with “UFO,” for better or worse.

Those with an interest in the subject should realize that just about everything associated with the study of UFOs is a theory. Until anyone can experience a sighting or abduction on demand, it will remain so. In the bigger picture, our ideas about everything we perceive are ultimately theories, it just happens that some are more reliable than others.

Skepticism Is Not A Dirty Word
2/02/2007

The term “zeteticism“ is one I have long kept close to my heart. The dictionary definition is:

> **1: Seeking; proceeding by inquiry. Zetetic method (Math.) the method used for finding the value of unknown quantities by direct search, in investigation, or in the solution of problems or 2: A seeker; - a name adopted by some of the Pyrrhonists.**

Looking up “pyrrhonism,” we find that the Greek philosopher Aenesidemus, building on the ideas of his predecessor Pyrrho, distilled skepticism to its bare essence. On reading the wikipedia entry, I am moved to quote it in full:

> “Nothing can be known, not even this.” Pyrrhonian skeptics withhold assent with regard to non-evident propositions and remain in a state of perpetual inquiry. For example, Pyrrhonians might assert that a lack of proof cannot constitute disproof, and that a lack of belief is vastly different from a state of active disbelief. Rather than disbelieving in God, psychic powers, etc., based on the lack of evidence of such things, Pyrrhonians recognize that we cannot be certain that new evidence won’t turn up in the future, and so they intentionally remain tentative and continue their inquiry. Pyrrhonians also question accepted knowledge, and view dogmatism as a disease of the mind.[1]

If we are at all serious about the UFO question, I can't see a better definition of enlightened fence-sitting than this. Suddenly, skepticism doesn't have to be a dirty word. It has been made so by the self-appointed and loudest cheerleaders for mainstream science, who essentially constitute a high priesthood of faith.

Disillusioned with what he saw as a betrayal of the skeptical method, Marcello Truzzi, one of the original founders of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP) broke with the organization early on. He was actually the recipient of a "no confidence" vote by the governing committee, which speaks volumes about the true aims of CSICOP (at least at the time.) He started a journal called *The Zetetic Scholar* to reclaim the field from what he called "pseudoskeptics":

> In science, the burden of proof falls upon the claimant; and the more extraordinary a claim, the heavier is the burden of proof demanded. The true skeptic takes an agnostic position, one that says the claim is not proved rather than disproved. He asserts that the claimant has not borne the burden of proof and that science must continue to build its cognitive map of reality without incorporating the extraordinary claim as a new "fact." Since the true skeptic does not assert a claim, he has no burden to prove anything. He just goes on using the established theories of "conventional science" as usual. But if a critic asserts that there is evidence for disproof, that he has a negative hypothesis–saying, for instance, that a seeming psi result was actually due to an artifact– he is making a claim and therefore also has to bear a burden of proof. [emphasis in original.][2]

The Zetetic Scholar published thoughtful articles by ufologists and paranormal researchers, as well as zetetic skeptics. The debate was open and intelligent, and showed that "forbidden" subjects could be discussed by open minds without the disdain that was (and is) evident in the popular skeptical community. Truzzi was not a publicity hound and his ideas could not be reduced to sound-bites, so very few have heard of him or his journal. Truzzi lost a fight with cancer in 2003.

[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyrrhonism
[2] http://tricksterbook.com/truzzi/ZeteticScholars.html

Fence Sitting on UFO Contact
7/13/2007

After my recent talk on contactees at the Roswell Festival, my girlfriend overheard a couple of people saying (rough quote here) "It seems like he doesn't want to commit to anything." They apparently continued to discuss whether I "believed" in the Contactees' tales or not, and seemed to be upset that I didn't take a strong stand about it. There are not many subjects in the UFO canon for which I hold strong beliefs. This is not the usual attitude at UFO conventions, and the speakers who make their audiences angry, scared, or awed get the callbacks. I was simply engaging in some fun speculation. At least I thought so.

The point of the lecture (for those who haven't seen it) is that some of the 1950s space brother folk may have had actual experiences with extra-human consciousness, while many of them were most likely making things up. The actual title of the talk was "The 1950s UFO Contactees: A Bunch Of Liars, or an Unrecognized Art Movement?" It was sort of a history lesson, and a guess that some of them may have had experiences that they couldn't put into thoughts and words other than "the space people are here to save us" message. The main idea of the talk was that the Contactees were sometimes a "bunch of liars," sometimes creating "art" and often both.

Since we can't possibly prove whether the Contactees actually met long-haired space hippies or not, how can anyone take a definitive position on the subject? Belief requires no proof, and I need some of that in a form that would convince any reasonable person. Since the Contactees are one of my interests, I choose to look at them as I suppose a sociologist might do. Labeling them an "art movement" was a little facetious, but the fact that they created fanciful literature, music, diagrams, and photos makes them creative in my book. They wanted to pass along ideas that are not amenable to "normal" modes of communication. Isn't that one of the main definitions of art?

This could apply to the entire UFO subject as well: A zetetic mindset informed by a creative approach. I suppose that's my current philosophy. [Still is. GB–2015.]

The Less Sense It Makes, The More True It Is
5/20/2009

This piece was sat in the "drafts" box for several weeks while I tried to make sense of the title, which came to me while listening to a podcast about the paranormal. It was also cued by my research into the history of the E Clampus Vitus group, whose motto is "Credo quia absurdum," (I believe because it is absurd.) The phrase is also a bowdlerized quote from the writings of Tertullian, a second century Christian apologist.

The phrase is tailor-made for the study of the paranormal. Like Charles Fort, we research reports of the strange because the absurd thumbs its nose at the concepts and theories that underlie the collective and authoritarian version of "reality." Reports that defy current concepts of what is possible

shouldn't be there, but accounts and studies continue to arrive. Some of them may even be accurate, or as close to accurate as we allow ourselves to be.

Things that "don't make sense" force us to re-examine what we define as "possible." In this sense, the weird sometimes draws us to new concepts and theories, leading us by our curiosity. As an example: Matter in the universe is not moving at a steady rate, which would be the case if the theory of the Big Bang was accurate. This forced astronomers to try and account for the discrepancy, which led to the theory of "dark matter" (and "dark energy") which can't be seen or measured as yet, but are inferred from their observed effects. Of course, the Big Bang theory is constantly under debate as well.

Unlike celestial phenomena, chemical reactions and fossils, UFOs, ghosts and ESP effects can't be observed by everyone on demand, but if we trust at least some observers, there is something happening that occurs with some regularity. Just because something is currently unexplained does not mean that it is unreal.

We might amend the above-quoted phrase to read "I am curious because it does not make sense." The anomalous leads us forward in our quest to find the truth and acts as a check on our misconceptions. This would include belief masquerading as fact, as well as facts and theories which are open to question. Some theories are so robust that we accept them as truth ("an airplane flies because of the pressure differential between the upper and lower surfaces of a wing") others need a bit of work ("UFOs are flying vehicles piloted by beings from other planets.")

In this sense, the most "truth" may be found in an honest quest for answers, even if that truth is constantly changing. Marrying ourselves to a conclusion that is occasionally called into question may be comforting, but may ultimately stall a more accurate worldview, which should be constantly evolving. One fringe benefit is that it keeps things interesting and maybe even fun.

Anti-Structure In Ufology
7/12/2008

Every once in awhile, various UFO fans call for a new organization of ufologists who will supposedly solve the enigma once and for all. This may be a mistake, given the nature of the subject, and how it presents itself to us.

The phenomenon appears to have standardized itself over the last 20 years or so. Abductions are carried out by what look like humanoid beings, often of the type depicted on the cover of *Communion*, at least much of the time–if we are to believe researchers who study this type of thing. Does this mean that the rest of the aliens decided that we weren't worth the time, or that they are on a cattle-stealing kick now? Reports from non-English speaking countries continue to exhibit more variety, or American and British researchers are keeping the anomalous information to themselves.

Sightings remain frustratingly fleeting and photos and video of UFOs are now practically useless, since they can be faked so easily. Why have there never been any good images taken of aliens, or whatever they are? Images floating around the internet could easily have been faked, or faked and leaked for reasons we can only guess at.

As George Hansen points out in his book *The Trickster and the Paranormal*, the UFOs and possible "aliens" are by their very nature deceitful and mercurial. Hansen also writes about the possibility that this deception may be due to our expectations as much as any intention on the part of the phenomenon. It is as if the phenomenon has adjusted itself to our scrutiny, or perhaps we have done this in order to make it easier to think about.

We may have set ourselves up for an inaccurate view of UFOs by our preconceptions and by the very nature of our mindset and even our language. How can we theorize about something that stands outside what we can describe or even think about? A non-human point of view may even look like a deception because we can't understand it fully.

Applying our standard concepts of information gathering to UFOs and the paranormal may be like trying to catch water in a fishnet, except that we don't even know that the water is there. Organizations like MUFON apply a structure of research–taking statements from witnesses, analyzing photos and radar traces and trying to figure out what an extraterrestrial civilization would be doing here–while the UFOs continue to appear and disappear. No real progress has been made in nearly 60 years, at least not by the civilian groups.

This is perhaps why a breakthrough (or at least a step in the right direction) will probably be made by either a small group or an individual who are quietly researching as you read this. The idea will probably not come from the UFO community, since many of them are focused on the ET hypothesis, which has not yielded any good results as yet. A physicist, psychologist, or perhaps even an artist will make the leap of logic have the "A-ha" moment which may render any theorizing by UFO fans obsolete and will make the aliens-from-other-planets idea seem as quaint as flat-earthers are today.

Mavericks have been the source of many breakthroughs in the past, and there is no reason why a solution to the UFO puzzle cannot come from a non-aligned individual. Given the anti-structural nature of the problem, it is almost inevitable that this scenario is the most likely.

"Unproveable" UFOs?
10/24/2007

Many people seem to natter on about "proof" and "evidence" when discussing UFO sightings. We would all love to see some kind of incontrovertible evidence to "prove" once and for all, that this subject we all hold dear is based in something that is "real" as defined by our society. As Nick Redfern and I have mentioned numerous times, that proof will not come unless someone with the public's trust makes an unequivocal statement or the phenomenon itself decides to do it for us. That second scenario is probably more likely, based on our history so far. The third, and most probable outcome is that we all have some sort of sea change in perception and understand the phenomenon for what it is, and/or most importantly, how it relates to us. This may come about as a result of some weird combination of the other two situations.

But all this theorizing aside, the UFO subject (and the paranormal in general) is FUN, dammit. I love reading about the strangest encounters or sightings, "true" or not–the weirder the better. It makes me realize why I started reading the literature when I was in elementary school. Fiction is enjoyable, and even more so when you reach an age when the subtleties of symbolism, allegory, etc. start to emerge. Reading about ghosts, bigfoot, UFOs and other assorted strangeness however, gave me the extra push I

needed to keep reading because "this might have actually happened." It still does.

While simple sightings will satisfy the neophyte, as one becomes more sophisticated in their tastes, stranger stuff waits in the wings. When *Fortean Times* magazine asked me for a top ten list of UFO sightings, I thought of a particularly weird one that I couldn't locate in the literature. Last night I stumbled on it in John Keel's *Strange Creatures From Time And Space*:

> In *UFOs Over the Americas* [Coral Lorenzen] devotes a full chapter to an interview with a witness in Lima, Peru who claimed an extraordinary UFO encounter back in 1947. The witness, identified only as Mr. C.A.V., was interviewed by APRO investigator Richard Greenwell on October 4, 1967–twenty years after the event. He came upon a grounded shiny disk on a highway outside of Lima one night, and when he approached it on foot, he was met by two incredible amoeba-like creatures. They looked like bananas joined together. Their skin was sandy-colored with a towel-like texture, and they were about five feet, five inches tall. A voice came at him "as if it came from a speaker," addressing him in English, a language he could understand. The voice told him that the creatures were sexless and they demonstrated by suddenly dividing themselves like amoebae. After conducting him on a rather quick tour of the rather barren interior of the flying saucer, they departed. One of the significant details is the fact that the man felt a loss of volition. "I was in a state where I was not under my own command" he said.

What are we to do with this sort of encounter? It certainly doesn't resemble any other case that comes to mind. We could theorize that the human collective unconscious (or perhaps that of "Mr. C.A.V.") didn't have a framework in which to fit the sighting, so the "creatures" remained literal "amorphous blobs." All guessing aside, it is this kind of story that is just so weird that it appeals to a sense of the bizarre. It thumbs its nose even at the strangeness inherent in all UFO literature, and satisfies the maverick in us who suspects that no matter how much is known, there will always be a handful of things that stand out on the fringe.

It is “unproveable,” and will likely remain so, but tan, terrycloth-covered telepathic mind-controlling bananas slithering out of shiny discs (and their kin) will always be out there on the fringe, laughing at the know-it-alls who indignantly turn up their noses. I prefer to stand with the outcasts and refugees from respectability.

Blurry Photos, Shaky Videos, And More Damn Sighting Reports
2/12/2010

Why do people seem to hang on to the latest videos, cell phone photos and reports of UFOs? It seems like we’re monkeys continuously pushing the “feed me” button. The problem is, we seem to think that the next time we punch it, we’ll get the whole tree instead of just another banana. Maybe most people just enjoy the momentary thrill.

The UFOmystic site featured some photos and video of anomalous lights and possible objects in the sky. We’ve even took a look at some frightening “flying humanoid” cases from Mexico and elsewhere. There were posts on notable and possibly spectacular sightings.

After over fifty years of an (occasionally) systematic study of UFOs, we seem to be nowhere nearer any good explanation than our parents and grandparents were. With all of the puzzling evidence, you would think that this mess would be solved by now. The cultural model for the phenomenon is still “aliens from other planets,” even though there is no verifiable evidence to back up this belief, which is presently all that we have. Many UFO researchers and fans know (somehow) that aliens are here and it’s only a matter of time before the rest of the population realizes this fact. Some of them are just waiting for that glorious “We told you so” day.

Near Borrego Springs, California, there is a monument to an old desert rat who called himself Pegleg Smith. Smith told those who would listen that he knew where a fabulous field of gold nuggets could be found in the mountains nearby. No one ever found the gold, but Pegleg kept up with his story, and other equally unbelievable yarns. About a century after Pegleg told his last tall tale, someone named “Desert Steve” put up a sign next to the main two-lane blacktop near town which still reads “LET THOSE WHO SEEK PEGLEG’S GOLD ADD TEN ROCKS TO THIS PILE.” The last time I visited the monument, the rock pile was about 20 feet high.

No matter how many rocks are added to the pile in belief of the gold nugget story, the lost field of riches still hasn't been found. Most people are content to throw ten rocks on the growing pile of belief, but it doesn't make the gold appear. There is a challenge to finding anything to throw on the pile these days, but tourists are still content to look and add to the monument. If anyone bothered to go looking for the lost gold today, they would probably find nothing to cash in, but they might find magnificent solitude, great views, and maybe even clues as to why Pegleg told his stories, which might be the most interesting part of the whole mess. Gold exists, but probably not where Pegleg said it did.

There is a very good chance that some sort of non-human intelligence occasionally interacts with us. What form this takes is still wide open to study and debate, but centuries of strange encounters and a myriad of sometimes reflexive phenomena makes it difficult (for me anyway) to keep stuffing everything into the "delusion" basket. Aliens could be coming from other planets, but why limit our possibilities?

There is almost certainly something to figure out with this UFO business, but gathering more rocks is probably not going to do much towards solving the mystery. Creative thought and new ways of looking at that pile of rocks will go much further than simply collecting them. I am not sure what kind of creativity will break the stalemate, but researchers and writers like Dr. Richard Strassman, Graham Hancock, Chris O'Brien, Mac Tonnies, Keith Thompson, George Hansen and Micah Hanks, and scientists working in their disciplines (such as Dean Radin, Hal Puthoff and Richard Jahn) continue to stretch the boundaries of our understanding of the paranormal. A concatenation of new thought may engender insights that could lead us to a new working model which connects ESP, cryptozoology and even UFOs in ways that we can't imagine as yet. As we keep looking, reading, and asking questions, one of us may make that breakthrough soon enough.

UFOs Spitting Flames
12/10/2008

Most close UFO sightings (close encounters of the first and second kinds) witnesses have reported that the objects seen often emitted sounds.

Most describe a humming or buzzing, which either rises in pitch or gets louder (or both) when the UFO is leaving.

In a couple of famous cases, witnesses observed craft which emitted a rocket-like blast. Policeman Lonnie Zamora heard a "roar" while patrolling near Socorro, New Mexico on April 24, 1964. He left the highway to investigate and came upon an oval object sitting on the ground with two figures standing next to it, which quickly disappeared and apparently entered the object. Zamora heard a few "metallic thumps" and then a loud rocket-like sound as the object lifted off the ground, spitting blue flames:

> "Noise was a roar, not a blast. Not like a jet. Changed from high frequency to low frequency and then stopped. Roar lasted possibly 10 seconds was going towards it at that time on the rough gravel road… At same time as roar, saw flame. Flame was under the object. Object was starting to go straight up slowly up… Flame was light blue and at bottom was sort of orange color… Thought, from roar, it might blow up…" When the roar stopped, he heard a whining sound going from high tone to low tone, which lasted about a second. "Then," he said, "there was complete silence… It appeared to go in [a] straight line and at same [constant] height, possibly 10 to 15 feet from ground, and it cleared the dynamite shack by about three feet… Object was traveling very fast. It seemed to rise up, and take off immediately across country."

Why did this UFO need to use a rocket engine to rise up just 10 or 15 feet? Zamora described nothing that sounds like a nozzle or other device that would be used to direct the thrust (unless it was enclosed in the body of the object.)

The December 29, 1980 sighting known as the Cash-Landrum incident also involved an unknown object with a rocket-like blast. The three witnesses were driving along an isolated road near Houston, Texas. From ufocasebook:

> …the three began to see a light in the distance, and in a few short minutes this light became a glowing object, slowly crossing the tops of the tall pine trees. The area that they were in was densely occupied by pine and oak trees, surrounded by occasional

> swamps and small lakes. As they proceeded along their way, their initial thought was that the object was an airplane or helicopter from one of the airfields not too distant from their location. Suddenly, ahead of them loomed an immense diamond-shaped craft, which was hovering over the road ahead of them. At regular, fast intervals, the object would shoot down a stream of reddish-orange flames.[3]

Witnesses Betty Cash and Vickie Landrum recalled that the craft would sink down towards the road and then let out a blast of exhaust, which appeared to raise it up again. The thing also emitted a loud beeping sound. Jerome Clark, quoted at wikipedia, wrote:

> Small blue lights ringed the center, and periodically over the next few minutes, flames shot out of the bottom, flaring outward, creating the effect of a large cone. Every time the fire dissipated, the UFO floated a few feet downwards toward the road. But when the flames blasted out again, the object rose about the same distance.[4]

The Socorro case remains unidentified, although it has been explained as everything from a hot air balloon to an attempt to create publicity for tourism. As for the Cash-Landrum incident, there are compelling reasons that point to some sort of military operation involving a secret aircraft, since the primary witnesses (as well as others) described a group of 23 military helicopters that arrived soon after the craft was sighted and appeared to "herd" it away. There are many more details in the case, such as symptoms of ionizing radiation experienced by Landrum and especially Cash, who got out of the car during the sighting, and a later encounter with a helicopter pilot who seemed to panic when Landrum mentioned that she was one of the people who saw the operation.

A few years ago, I was told that the two women (and Landrum's seven-year-old grandson, who was also in the car that night) had actually seen a test of an atomic-powered aircraft that had run into trouble on a test flight. The pilots (there were two) had lost their video monitors, which was apparently the only way they had of seeing where they were going. The system was required to keep the occupants safe from the radiation generated

by the craft. Of course, government agents can tell us anything they want–off the record. This also begs the question of just what was keeping the craft airborne when the rocket motor was shut off.

Zamora reported the flame jetting out from the bottom of the object as bluish, with an orange border. This compares favorably with observations of burning rocket fuel, whether it be liquid hydrogen, kerosene, or hydrazine, all of which were operational in the mid 1960s.

Regarding the Texas case, some atomic rockets work by pumping liquid hydrogen through a small nuclear reactor, and of course produces an exhaust plume. This process creates radionuclides, which emit ionizing radiation.

Does this mean that Socorro, and indeed any other reports of flame and smoke-spewing UFOs should be placed in the "secret aircraft" category? No one seemed to see rocket like UFOs until after the dawn of the popular awareness of rocketry, which began after WWII. Is this an indication of our collective unconscious influencing what we think we see, or does it go deeper?

If there is an intelligence behind the UFO enigma, it may use our preconceptions as a template. This is of course not a new idea. Perhaps the most important factor in UFO sightings may be an interaction between what we think we see and what is causing it, maybe to the point that a camera sees it as well. As popular ideas of what flying saucers should look and sound like entered the cultural lexicon, sightings may have conformed to the script. A survey of this variety of sighting, concentrating on the frequency and year of occurrence, may be in order.

[3] http://www.ufocasebook.com/Pineywoods.html

[4] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cash-Landrum_incident

Alien Evolution, Alien Motivation
5/24/2007

On a promotional tour for *Star Trek IV*, director Leonard Nimoy was asked if he thought that whales (who play a major role in the film story) were "ahead or behind" us on the evolutionary continuum. His answer provides a good model for looking at the "alien problem." He said that cetaceans may have evolved "off to the side"–from our point of view. My

interpretation of this statement is that other sentient beings on this planet have evolved strategies that provide for their comfort and survival, and that a homo sapiens-centric view of their "intelligence" is probably not the best way to assess their motivations. When someone declares (with almost no evidence to back it up besides their preconceptions) that "aliens" are "thousands of years ahead of us," they may be on the wrong track from the start.

The non-human entities reported by abductees resemble giant human fetuses, or at least that is the reigning paradigm at the moment. This form is most probably whatever we expect to see at this point in history. Unless I am mistaken, there were no reports of anything resembling this sort of being before the 1960s, Roswell witnesses notwithstanding.

Throughout history, the extra-humans reported by witnesses have almost always been humanoid in appearance. Do we need to assume that all intelligent life looks like us? This seems awfully presumptuous. Perhaps this is the only way our minds can comprehend other sentient life who can communicate with us. If we take this a step further, we can also guess that their motivations would need to be comprehensible in human terms. It has also been pointed out by many others that these beings may control our perceptions of them and our environment when we are in their presence. Perhaps the situation is a symbiosis of our expectations and their projections. [Actually, that is part of my main thesis at this time (2015) – GB]

Today I saw a group of dolphins jumping around in the ocean just off shore. They were launching themselves completely out of the water, sometimes landing on their backs. Knowing nothing of dolphin behavior (since I am not a marine biologist) I could make many guesses about reasons for this behavior, and I would probably be wrong.

Ufologists routinely assume that aliens are coming here from other planets to gather biological and emotional information and "samples" from us to improve their race. There are a host of indefensible assumptions in that philosophy, but many researchers defend their point of view with unreasonable fervor.

Of course, I cannot begin to comprehend much of what these Ufologists have seen and studied, but I still think that whatever it is that is making an appearance in our reality (our mental reality anyway) is so far removed from ordinary waking consciousness and our rules of what is "real" that we

don't have the psychological, scientific, or conceptual tools to grasp its true nature. Our friends in the "other" may be so far off of our mental map that we can't see them for what they are, whatever that means.

We only have the concepts that we have made, and that already puts us in a bind when something so vast and pervasive as the UFO question occasionally and fleetingly pokes itself into our perception.

The following piece generated more negative comments (with the possible exception of my column on the imagery in the Barney and Betty Hill abduction and its possible origins in an old Outer Limits *episode) than any other on UFOmystic. The one I remember best was someone who said, "Oh sure. It looks exactly like a UFO but of course it's not." Readers also thought that I had tried to debunk supposed depictions of UFOs in ALL artwork throughout history. Apparently they hadn't read the actual title of the article. As the late Bruce Duensing pointed out, many people are generally averse to complexity.*

Shouldn't we eliminate what is known in order to concentrate on as-yet unknowns? We interpret many things quite differently in the 21st century than Italians of the 14th and 15th centuries.

UFOs in Renaissance Paintings Explained
5/22/2008

An old canard used by UFO enthusiasts from the 1950s to the present has been debunked by an Italian art historian. The original article has been around since at least 2004, but since it was originally published in *Skeptic* magazine, most ufologists have chosen to ignore the analysis.

Diego Cuoghi examined many of the strange, saucer like objects hovering in the background of Italian renaissance paintings, and applied a thorough knowledge of Renaissance Christian iconography to show that most, if not all of these examples can be explained as representations of saints, the holy spirit, angels etc.

Madonna and Child With The Infant St. John
by Sebastiano Mainardi, ca. late 15th century.

Cuoghi also looked at a myriad of websites dealing with UFOs in old religious paintings and explains:

> …no one of the authors of these web sites takes into account the symbolic meaning of these strange elements in respect to the art of the period. Worst of all, by considering these elements as the representation of something real or really seen by the artist, they assume that the artist, eg. an Italian artist of the '400 [likely translation error–should be "1400s] or an anonymous Byzantine painter, [would] actually be allowed to insert any non canonical or un-codified element into a religious representation. On the contrary, in past times the commissioners (those who choose the subject and supervised the execution of the art work–in these cases the religious institutions) would have never allowed the [artist] to insert into a work of art anything other than what previously decided, especially in case of religious subjects. [5]

In other words, everything in Roman Catholic religious paintings had to be approved by the Church before any public display could be allowed. The local Cardinal would have questioned everything in the work, and if the artist just happened to have seen or heard of shiny flying plates didn't mean that he could put them in his painting.

As someone trained in art history, but also interested in UFOs, I find Cuoghi's analysis convincing, no matter how hard I try to hold on to the

belief that UFOs are depicted in 500 year-old religious paintings. There is no real evidence for standard interpretation of weird, flying saucer-like shapes in artwork of other times and cultures, since we often have nothing to compare them to. In this case, we do.

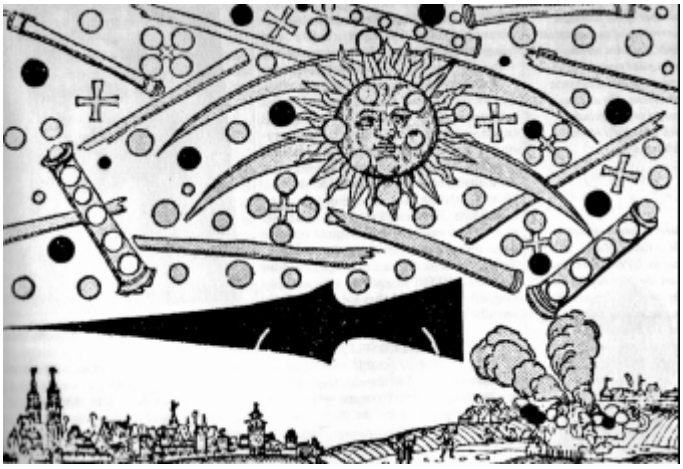
Concerning the *Madonna and Child*, (with the golden-tinged oval) Cuoghi makes the point that at the time the painting was done, there was an austerity movement afoot in Florence (where it was created) that forbade literal depictions of the Deity or angels. Artists resorted to symbols in the sky instead of cherubic faces in a ring, or angels parting clouds, etc. The man and the dog below it represent the announcement of Christ's birth to the shepherds, and is found in many other paintings. Some art historians have since commented that the flying saucer shape in the painting (with the golden rays) is most likely an angel depicted as a luminous cloud, which appears in a few other paintings.

We can of course guess that the artist saw or heard about something in the sky that he put in his painting in a standard way in order to depict something that he thought was divine in origin. I feel that this is stretching things a bit.

Detail from a 14th century fresco of the Crucifixion
at Visoki Decani Monastery in Kosovo.

The other image from the article, of people apparently piloting spaceships, is from a fresco of the crucifixion. The arrangement of the elements also matches other artworks on the same theme. If you look closely, the figures in the spaceship/orbs are male and female, and represent the sun and moon. This also has a wealth of precedents in other medieval and byzantine art. The tradition was gradually abandoned after the 15th century.

Once again, the artist may have been using his own depiction of something strange in the sky under the guise of religious iconography, but since there is a more direct explanation for it, I choose to err on that side.



Nuremberg “sky battle” illustration.

In other comments I have mentioned the Nuremberg woodblock print of 1561 as a possible example of a well-documented depiction of a UFO

sighting. There are also numerous examples in petroglyphs and other pre-historic art.

[5] http://www.diegocuoghi.com/arte-ufo/SKEPTIC_CUOGHI_ARTUFO_complete.pdf

Getting Rich And Famous From UFOs
3/29/2008

Occasionally, there are a few rumblings around the virtual UFO world about authors and researchers who seem to be in the UFO biz for the fame, drinking parties, and chicks (or guys). I can hardly contain my pain-streaked laughter when I read things like this. Anyone who is involved in studying anomalies had better look elsewhere for adoring crowds, fortune and casual sex.

Some of the few people making money from UFOs are conference organizers (and that is rare.) Perhaps one or two of the author/ researchers have made enough money on their books and videos to cover their expenses and maybe a greasy taco. The largest crowds at conventions generally number a few hundred. If that's all you need in the adulation department, you're not aiming high enough.

Other than people like Stanton Friedman, Linda Howe, Richard Dolan (and perhaps Whitley Strieber), the UFO field is not populated with anyone who comes even close to making a living from reporting on UFOs and "aliens." The only ones making a decent income from the subject are probably television and film producers who read a few books, talk to a few writers, and make the right deals. Publishers also sometimes realize a modest profit, but the misses outnumber the hits by a wide margin.

Women who could conceivably make the cover of the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue are not usually found at UFO conventions. UFO researchers (male ones anyway) are not generally thought of as babe magnets. This of course assumes that you *want* to meet swimsuit models. If so, flying saucer gatherings are not a good bet.

I find that many of my friends (male and female) are either vaguely interested in UFOs, or don't really care about them at all. The ones that are

into the subject have other interests that are usually just as worthy of conversation. And yes, we do attend parties, and we do drink alcohol. Isn't that what most people do?

I see other UFO writers maybe once a year if I'm lucky, and that's because we're speaking at the same convention. We probably talk UFOs for perhaps 30 percent of the time, more if we're arguing about something. The time spent together, however is often too precious to discuss Roswell or the latest sighting or whatever. That can be done on the phone or online. Actually, minutiae is mentioned far less than ideas and theories that can be supported by decent facts and observations. A new idea is almost always more important than a new UFO case any day.

Most of these people didn't write about something because they wanted favors. They did it because there was a genuine curiosity that was sometimes supported by a publisher. That also involves work and even more luck. It's not out of the range of many people's talents.

One of the other things I feel lucky to experience at these gatherings is to talk about what I have written with readers. I certainly avail myself of this opportunity when I see an author or researcher wandering the halls of the hotel or sitting at their tables. The fact that I have written a couple of books helps to grease the wheels, and is one of the many reasons why I got involved in the first place.

Surprise, surprise. Like many who are interested in the subject, I have a genuine curiosity about things that don't have an explanation yet, and it's fun and educational to talk with people who know more than me, or who have better connections for information. No one person has "the answer," and those that think they do are generally fundamentalist and humorless. Those sorts of people attend UFO conventions too, but I don't generally party with them.

If there is an "answer" to be found in the UFO enigma, it will probably come by accident to those who realize that the search is likely much of the goal, and/or a genuinely inspired and original bit of thinking. Science may only cover part of this. The phenomenon itself certainly isn't handing out answers, or selling them, or running a casting couch.

This opinion piece was written on request for a group called the League Of Western Fortean Intermediatists (LOWFI) who have representatives in

most states west of the Mississippi. Forteans follow the writings and philosophy of early 20th-century author Charles Hoy Fort, who catalogued and philosophized about all manner of strange phenomena but did not feel the need to "believe" in any of it. His reservation of judgment is a fine example to follow.

Intermediatism Is Bliss... Fortean Intermediatism and Indeterminacy
3/2009

"I can conceive of nothing, in religion, science or philosophy, that is anything more than the proper thing to wear, for a while."
- Charles Hoy Fort

When I first heard about the LOWFI project, I thought that the "I" stood for "indeterminist." This was excellent news. FINALLY someone was going to enshrine the concept of indeterminacy in a formal organization.

When I found that the word was "intermediatist," I must admit that I was stumped. An article by Charles Miller from Patrick Huyghe's excellent *Anomalist* journal provides an answer:

> **…**an "intermediatist" is one who accepts that the universe is in a perpetual state of metamorphosis, such that no extreme identity can stand for very long without evolving to another extreme. In the intermediate universe, there are no eternal truths; at best, what we accept as "fact" is actually an ongoing transition of fact-to-falsehood-to-fantasy-to-fact, ad infinitum. In the intermediate universe, the most iron-clad scientific facts of yesterday may (and usually do) topple into the trash-bin of scientific naiveté, while the scientific heresies of today may (and usually do) evolve into the iron-clad science facts of tomorrow. The "intermediatist" observes this peculiar evolution and comments upon it.
>
> ..and I would add, believes in the process as a guiding principle.

In this way, the Intermediatist is really not much different from the Indeterminist. Both celebrate the quicksilver nature of humankind's understanding of the world around it, and even humanity itself. A Fortean

need only go forth in search of anomalies with this attitude for the maximum richness of information and enjoyment.

An author whom I admire told me one of the most important things to remember when looking at any issue is this: “In the process of translation, information is lost and gained.” He used the literal example of translation from one language to another, although it can be used for any instance of information transfer. The original message goes through the mind of the translator, picking up meanings, subtleties and cultural references, as well as the personality of the translator, including his or her psychological makeup.

Don’t make the mistake that this is a bad thing. Our instrument for perceiving and thinking about our existence is there for a reason. The richness of information contained in any description or opinion is “biased” for a reason, and something that a computerized, “literal” translation will always miss. Thoughts are never fully communicated from one consciousness to another, at least in the way that the originator intended. From this comes variety, new meanings and diversity.

We would do well to keep this in mind when investigating (or simply thinking about) everything from Bigfoot to flying saucers. The indeterminacy of the intermediatist should be ready to accept all interpretations, especially from witnesses’ first-hand testimony. “Objectivity” may be highly overrated, especially when dealing with things for which we have no fixed/ temporary explanation as yet, and may not in our lifetimes, but so what?

INDETERMINATE. INTERMEDIATE. It’s the mantra. Repeat.

This response to a poor review of Project Beta *was sent to the* International UFO Reporter*, which was the journal of the Center For UFO Studies. As far as I know, it was never published. This may be due to the fact that I did not see the review until a couple of years after publication. The original piece can be found online at Scribd.com[6] and other places. To my mind, the main problem is that the reviewer apparently wrote it without finishing the book or by ignoring much of the text.*

Response To A Review Of *Project Beta*

An unfortunately error-ridden review of my book *Project Beta* has appeared in Vol. 30, Issue #1 of the *International UFO Reporter*. This venerated journal, one of the few longtime newsletters of record in American ufology, has published an emotionally-laden and apparently hastily researched diatribe against both my book, as well as *Body Snatchers In The Desert* by Nick Redfern. I will let Nick respond as he sees fit, but I would like to point out some of the numerous inaccuracies and near-slander contained in the working-over of myself and my research. To answer everything point-by point would take nearly as many words as the review itself, so I will confine myself to the most glaring examples.

Although it is nigh-impossible to be objective in any human endeavor, and much less so as a critic, the reviewer presents himself (consciously or not) as a crusader for the "truth" about the UFO subject, but he falls into the trap that is so common in the field: he becomes a Defender Of The Faith. Setting off on this path is not a good way to act for someone who presents himself as a scientific observer, which is a philosophy that the Center for UFO Studies justifiably prides itself in holding. This makes it all the more distressing that the editorial staff of the *IUR* saw fit to publish this review. *Project Beta* was conceived as a story with a warning. It's not like Ufology doesn't need to be reminded not to take everything at face value, but for some reason, this reminder needs to be repeated at regular intervals. We need to know what is false, and how it became that way in order to consider more valuable data.

While I would prefer to say that the review is difficult to answer, and that he presents many valid and noteworthy points regarding the facts as presented in *Project Beta*, he unfortunately doesn't. It begins by essentially comparing me to skeptical journalist Peter Jennings in the universally disdained (at least amongst mainstream Ufologists) ABC special *UFOs: Seeing Is Believing*, which aired on February 24th of this year. I only wish that I commanded Jennings' salary for what I do. The ABC people called me up months before the show and asked my opinion of the UFO subject. Apparently, they were sufficiently unimpressed with my opinion to take things much further, and they passed after a few phone calls. Is this because I was too skeptical, or not skeptical enough? Most likely, it was due to some other mysterious factor, but it is highly disingenuous for your reviewer to condemn an author at the outset with guilt by association, however tenuous.

Strangely, the piece appears to treat elements of my story as common knowledge or facts that the reviewer has somehow laboriously dug up on his own, or were unknown before *Project Beta* was published. The fact that Bennewitz dropped out of his doctorate program to run his increasingly successful business is but one example. This method of using my findings and at times hard-fought research to conveniently fit his own version of events occurs with disturbing regularity in his review. This is a classic disingenuous method of debate.

In many places in the article, it appears that your reviewer has not actually read the book he is purporting to review. He writes "a critical decision was made by OSI (actually AFOSI) to disinform Bennewitz and not simply tell him to cease and desist. "Why this second option was not taken remains a profound mystery," he states. If he had taken the time to actually read the whole book (or read it without emotionally-laden blinders on) he could have found the answer on page 114: "…why were they [the AFOSI and others] encouraging Bennewitz to keep looking and make more noise? …If Bennewitz shouted long and loud enough, the ones who the spooks were truly worried about would come calling, pretending to be innocently interested in UFOs while actually trying to gather as much information as possible on anything that was being developed at Kirtland as well as other bases around the country. Meanwhile, the UFO fanatics could be counted on to look for spacemen in flying saucers." I reiterated this in other places, namely on page 177 where I stated that the Air Force chose to take charge of his perceptions rather than ignore him or tell him to stop.

The review continues in this erroneous vein, and relates that secret coded transmissions that Bennewitz was receiving on his self-designed equipment were used to control Russian spy satellites. Nearly an entire chapter (#22 "Revelations"–pgs. 173-181) was devoted to the story of the Air Force discovery that lasers were in fact the method used to hack Soviet satellites, not radio transmissions. Did the reviewer speed-read the *Cliffs Notes* on *Project Beta*?

Even though he ends up shooting himself in the foot, he includes a section on AFOSI Agent Richard Doty's appearance with myself on *Coast To Coast* with Art Bell, which was aired on February 27th of this year. He cites numerous quotes from Doty of interest to Ufologists from the program, then states, "Doty presents us with a concrete example of the paradox, 'Everything I say is a lie.' He was paid to lie, trained in the art of

lying, and rewarded for his success in lying." From this reviewer's point of view, it seems that Doty telling the truth only when he is saying something that resonates with his own agenda, such as Doty's admission that he saw films of the Roswell crash recovery.

Complaining that I never flesh out Paul Bennewitz as a person, the review mentions I missed a "golden opportunity" to regale readers with details of his personal life. This is one of the few instances where he is correct. I interviewed six people who knew Bennewitz. (Bill Moore, Gabe Valdez, Richard Doty, Leo Sprinkle, an Air Force Weapons Lab scientist and Christa Tilton) and asked them all for recollections of Paul's personality and private life. None of them could supply more than the most insignificant details. All said that their only interaction with him concerned the UFO subject, and that he was very private if not secretive about himself. His family categorically denied any involvement with my book, and the accounts of those I contacted supported the very real possibility that he was a closeted genius.

As for the other parts of the book's subtitle, "National Security" and "The Creation of a Modern UFO Myth" and the reviewer's failure to understand why these subjects were not addressed in the book, I can only respond again that he doesn't seem to have read or digested the mountains of information I discussed regarding the history of the national intelligence structure, and how the lies perpetrated during the Bennewitz episode spread through the UFO subculture.

The review ends with a litany of instances where the U.S. Government offered "inside" information to UFO researchers, only to take it back at the last and sometimes crucial moment. Although he says that I ignored these opportunities to inform the reader, in his list of thirteen accounts, I included detailed synopses of seven in the text. I even went further back than this reviewer in describing a 1957 offer of UFO footage to Walt Disney. The story of Whitley Strieber's mysterious phone call that Durant mentions was not an offer of help from the government, and the 1996 account of Nick Redfern's interaction with various sources which would result in *Body Snatchers In The Desert* was not even known until this year.

I am quite surprised that your IUFOR reviewer did not collapse into paroxysms of umbrage at the passage in *Project Beta* that concerned Dr. J. Allen Hynek, founder of CUFOS. Moore stated that Hynek had told him privately that he (Hynek) had (unwittingly or not) assisted in the disinfo

campaign against Paul Bennewitz by delivering to him a computer which contained encrypted messages designed by the Air Force to compliment Bennewitz' growing suspicions about an underground base near Dulce, New Mexico. While researching the book, I repeatedly tried to contact CUFOS regarding any of Hynek's personal records pertaining to Bennewitz. While director Mark Rodeghier told me that he would try to locate these files, unfortunately nothing ever came of it. The failure to even mention this account in the review suggests that the text was not very carefully examined before accusations were leveled.

Had this review of *Project Beta* been merely mean-spirited, I would barely have noticed. Since it twisted my words, perhaps willfully ignored many aspects of the narrative, and used my own research to make the writer appear an authority on the case and its implications, it was imperative that I respond.

While I do not consider UFOs a major world concern right now, it has nevertheless been an interest of mine since childhood, and if this reviewer had taken even a few minutes to look up my numerous writings and opinions on the subject, he would not have written that I do "not take UFOs seriously" and that I know "little about Ufology." What I tried to make clear in *Project Beta* was that many of the so-called ufologists who get the most airtime and coverage in the media are the ones who are interested in self-aggrandizement first, and accuracy second. This is what bothers me—the "serious people who take UFOs seriously" of whom he claims that I am willfully ignorant, are almost never heard from. The reason for this is that they generally present mountains of boring data and careful statements, which makes for boring journalism, at least as it has been practiced in this country for generations. The headline grabbers and those with sensationalistic claims affect public opinion, and that is ufology's loss. Until whatever it is that is behind the UFO phenomenon decides to reveal itself to the world in an unequivocal way, UFO researchers will be chasing their tails, as far as the public is concerned.

[6] http://www.scribd.com/doc/34473106/International-UFO-Reporter-v30#scri

Alien Photos

1/28/08

How many of you remember the weird picture of the secret agent-types in trench coats leading the little alien dude around?

I've seen this in books and old magazines for years. It's been proven as a hoax, since the original photo (without the small figure) was located and exposed. It never looked authentic anyway, and the only people who believed it were those who wanted to. It constituted a meme that spread for years, until it was replaced by new ones like the alien in the foil suit who appeared to Falkville, Alabama police chief Jeff Greenhaw on the night of October 17, 1973. Greenhaw snapped a few pictures of the figure before it took off across a plowed field with Greenhaw in pursuit. It outran his pickup truck and the chase was abandoned. "He was running faster than any human I ever saw," he said. This photo has a better provenance than the secret agent alien, but we are still left with only the witness' account of

what he saw. Unfortunately, the figure looks like a man in a fire-retardant suit. Perhaps this contradiction is evidence for its authenticity, but that sort of logic will not get one very far in the straight world.

Of course, now anyone can produce a photo or video of an alien or UFO. Older pictures may be the only objective evidence we have of the

phenomenon. It's too bad that we don't have many pictures of occupants. In 1996, Whitley Strieber touted a picture of a supposed "grey" that he said might be authentic because of "anatomical structures around the black eye covers that I have observed but intentionally never reported anywhere." Strieber stated that the photo was most likely a hoax, but was convinced that the originator had experienced actual contact with alien beings, or had to talked to someone who did.

What are we to do with these pictures? Are they actual "alien" beings, hoaxes, or more like cultural signposts? Are we affecting the phenomenon by our imaginings, or is it subtly steering us to an appearance that it wants us to believe? Perhaps these images represent a subconscious marriage between our expectations and a mindless force that doesn't care what we think about it.

Another source of some of these images may be from the fertile minds of disinfo artists who produce them for reasons unknown, but having to do with inscrutable intelligence operations, like this one that appeared on the cover of former intel agent Robert Collins' book *Exempt From Disclosure*. The original was apparently handed to UFO researcher Robert Dean many years ago by a man representing himself as a Mexican policeman.

Perhaps the safest assumption is that "alien" photos represent what we want to believe, created by humans for many reasons, including profit, fame, notoriety, or even inspiration, like religious icons of historical figures that the artist will never meet. The least likely scenario to me is that some of these images are of actual "aliens."

Here's a weird one I found sitting in a disused folder on an old drive. Looks like it was an answer to an online posting or perhaps a request for a response from a 'zine publisher. From the strident wording, it appears that this written was just after my desperately paranoid period.

Are We Being Lied To?
7/27/00

Well, shit, when are we NOT being lied to? What's that phrase from "The X-Files," "I want to believe"? Think how mind-numbingly easy it is just to believe, not to question the information bombarding us every day.

Our minds fill in the cognitively dissonant spaces. Most of us spend so much mental and spiritual time and effort just to stay alive and well and possibly happy that there is little room left to question lies, but they surround us like a acrid fog. Any group, company, or institution with a vested interest in the economic and social status quo is suspect, and invariably guilty.

The word from the conspiracy crowd (and certain of their friends shirking about the shadows of the military and bowels of government) is that people will start to care about the lies when there are three colors and styles of clothes, cars, and personal computers, and stops on every highway (online and on land) to check I.D.s. If this is true, then disinformation and spin control will never end. It is far easier and more profitable to let us THINK we have a choice than through any jackbooted door-smashing tactics. It is insidious and will continue to be so. Probably the best hope right now is a simple awareness that guides our perception. Keep the early-warning system alive.

A quick scan of the available "conspiracy" literature is a real head-spinner. If you read too many of these stories (and who ever stops at just one) the paranoid mindset is guaranteed to take over. What was that noise on the phone? Who is that in the rearview mirror? Why is there tape over the envelopes in my mailbox? The paranoid style will become part of your life, like eating and breathing and looking for someone to get naked with.

Ever since the first time that doctor smacked you on the butt, you have been lied to. You're a grownup now.

From Belief to Knowing
1/24/07

I recently posited a three-step echelon of reaction to the anomalous. Perhaps they are more akin to categories:

1) Interest

2) Belief

3) Knowing

Interest may be sparked by a book you read, a movie or TV show, or a conversation, etc. A precipitating idea makes certain people want to find out more. They may have something missing in their lives, unanswered questions about the nature of existence, or simply a desire to know things that are beyond the experience of most people. At times, it takes on the dimensions of a spiritual quest. The study of UFOs is a great way to kick around a lot of unpopular ideas. It brings up questions about our place in the scheme of things. It sometimes places the more intelligent among us on the cutting edge of scientific and philosophical speculation.

Belief is a very tricky word. A great mistake that some of us who like to talk UFOs make is to make a quick transition to a Belief System (B.S. for short) of "aliens from other planets." This is unfortunate, as it basically shuts down any further learning, and ignores the historical record of possible contact with non-human intelligence. Belief must be defended at any cost, and it's often based in nothing that is provable, at least by the game rules of the larger society. Fundamentalist Skeptics are trapped in their belief structures as well, and defend them with the same fervor and occasional disregard for facts or logic.

A few of us bypass steps/ categories 1 and 2. For the individual who knows that there really is something knocking at our collective consciousness, there is no defensive stance needed. It's not easy to spot this type of person. They generally shut up about it because there is no need to prove anything. The experience they have gone through may not even be explainable in words. To try would be folly. Beware of those who say they "know" certain things to be true. They're most likely lying, at least to themselves.

Obviously, the experience that led to the "knowing" may be erroneous, but at least we may not be subjected to the shrill cries of the converted. Actually, it might be a case of B.S. If the gut feelings are at peace, this is probably not an issue.

On different days, I find myself hovering around steps 1 and 2. Until I have an unequivocal experience (whatever that might be, and whatever it is) I will not know for certain that there is anything other than us, alone, here on this planet. If that happens, maybe I'll stop writing about it.

I do have a strong suspicion (another category?) that we have been interacting with non-human consciousness for most of our history, but most

of you know that already.

Intelligent Design, Or Nature?
9/12/07

Since I look at the world around us as a naturally occurring system with the appearance of purpose and "design," does that mean I agree with the Intelligent Design movement?

Not particularly.

The ID crowd is for the most part driven by religious conviction, specifically a western Judeo-Christian view of existence. I have little problem with that, as long as it's not forced on me, others who don't want it, or institutionalized in laws that everyone must follow. As I have said before, all -isms are perfect until people get involved. Interpretations, belief systems (B.S.) and fundamentalist thinking cause the problems.

For some reason, many people need to believe that if there is an intelligence in nature and existence, it has to come from a bearded old man in the sky. Maybe it does, but I tend to think that this is our attempt to make sense of things in human terms–not that there's anything particularly wrong with that.

On the *UFO Coverup Live!* show that aired in 1989, one of the "government intelligence" people who appeared in shadow with his voice altered said "The aliens worship the Universe as a Supreme Being." I have no idea where they got this concept, since almost everything they said was suspect, but the sentiment stayed with me for years until I heard a lecture by Alan Watts in which he said "Where there are rocks, watch out, because someday the rocks are going to start walking around."

What he meant by this is that perhaps intelligence is an inherent property of all matter, that is, given enough time (billions of years?) and the right conditions, life and intelligence will naturally arise out of the elements. If we want to assign this to a discarnate intelligence, so be it, but perhaps the universe knows what it's doing no matter what we have to say about it.

This "universal intelligence" may manifest in ways that are still unimaginable to us–or in ways that look like UFOs, or Bigfoot, or the Chupacabras etc.–at least in our perception of space-time. In other words

the consciousness of matter may manifest in countless incarnations, and to think that it has to appear immediately comprehensible to us at this point in our intellectual evolution may be a mistake.

Call this "universal mind" what you will…

What Is the Question?
9/10/07

While the public interest in UFOs continues to wax and wane, the people whose self-appointed job is to explain the unexplained in the skies apparently continue to play their favorite tunes from their favorite record– the one entitled "UFOs Are Real." Songs from this former best-seller include *Government Coverup*, *Abduction*, and *Extraterrestrial Hypothesis*. The songs get your toes tapping and at first, made you think. Nowadays, memory lane should be reserved for the old guard and those who are satisfied with the thrill of thinking that their belief system is the One Truth. They still think that if the world would just realize that aliens from other planets are here, things would be much better.

Let's go out on a limb here and propose that we will never "prove" that aliens are coming here to surprise motorists on lonely roads, kill our livestock and diddle our behinds. If it hasn't been determined by now, whose fault is that? The phenomenon itself seems to change each time we think we have it figured out, or more accurately, stays a few steps ahead of us–at least where we are in our technological development at the time. Perhaps we are complicit in this.

My old friend Donna Kossy, historian and philosopher of the kooky and weird, once said that spiritualist-type religious movements always seem to be placing their extraterrestrial gods just out of reach of our telescopes. Consider that the Theosophists and later the Contactees originally worshipped ascended masters from Mars and Venus. After we landed on the moon (or supposedly so) and we had sent probes to Mars and beyond, the space brothers were moved out of the solar system.

No one that we know of has tracked a flying saucer heading back towards home, somewhere in interstellar space. There could be a coverup of this sort of thing, but no one has turned up anything on the matter, as far as

I know. If this is true, then the Powers That Know More Than Us are just as dumb in their assumptions as the UFO believers. Everything that has trickled down to us from officialdom agrees with our preconceived ideas about aliens and UFOs. Our filtering system may be too narrow to catch things that don't agree with the extraterrestrial hypothesis. This applies to much of the human race.

The Occam's Razor argument replies that this is simply because we are on the right track and the government really *does* know everything. If this is the case, why are former spies still skulking around the fringes of Ufology, and still interested in answers to the biggest question?

That's why I like to look at theories that aren't as obvious or popular. Not only is it more interesting, it may hold part of the answer to both the UFO question, and perhaps how we look at ourselves and how we affect and filter the things we study. It may be one of the few options open to those who study UFOs, and if history teaches us anything, it's that we will probably never know everything.

How Should "Disclosure" Be Handled?
4/29/09

Here are some ideas about so-called UFO "disclosure" by the U.S. Government, and how to achieve it.

Activists like Stephen Bassett believe that overt pressure on government officials though the use of star witnesses and diligent research will force the issue enough to make UFOs a priority agenda item in the halls of the legislature. Small blips on the media radar are counted as victories for the cause. The idea (I believe) is that a string of such revelations will coalesce into some sort of grassroots movement amongst people who have never had an interest in UFOs and/ or will force lawmakers to call for a release of official information. Unfortunately, some personalities in this movement also piggyback their belief in extraterrestrials on the Disclosure agenda, which does little to engender serious public debate.

Perhaps a good example of this in our history was the Vietnam War. It has been persuasively argued that a generation who took to the streets in protest of that episode was the reason for the U.S. withdrawal in 1973.

Some of the more vocal proponents of this theory fail to take into account the increasing problems for the U.S. presence in the region, and other factors which made it a losing proposition, such as the ineffectiveness of the air war and the surprising resolve and inventiveness of the North Vietnamese.

If we consider the original efforts of Major Donald Keyhoe to force government openness on the UFO subject from the mid-1950s to the 1960s, and the almost complete failure of this tactic over the last 50 years, it seems unlikely that any UFO information will be forthcoming from officialdom in the near future. It's not something that is a big problem for those who are keeping any secrets about UFOs and possible "aliens." There are no extenuating circumstances to force their hand.

Nick Redfern and I have both argued our belief that the U.S. Government is hiding its *ignorance* of UFOs more than any so-called "truth" about the origin and purpose of any non-human presence. If this is the case, perhaps "disclosure" is almost impossible, since the power structure is not about to admit to anything that it doesn't know enough about and can't control.

Rumors of crashed vehicles and releases of questionable documents relating to aliens does little to convince the news media, academia, or most of the public, and it shouldn't. Many current and former government officials and public office holders are interested in UFOs, and have tried to crack the shell of secrecy surrounding the subject, with no reported success. The relevant records might be out of the reach of officialdom because they may have been moved into the private sector, out of reach of popular redress and FOIA requests.

Perhaps the best way to go about an open release of official UFO files would be to treat it as a political game rather than a protest movement. A quorum of insiders must decide to play the game in the labyrinth of security, closed records, and officials who have made secrecy and paranoia a career choice. For all we know, this may have happened or is happening now. This scenario is of course mostly (or completely) out of the control of the public and those who call for "disclosure."

Does this mean that those who study UFOs and call for an official examination of the phenomenon should give up? Of course not. The best private research on the UFO enigma (maybe even amongst Disclosure advocates!) may influence these "insiders." Intelligent people in these ranks

will look at the most convincing data. Media presentations on the best evidence (to borrow a phrase from Paul Kimball) may also be an important factor in convincing someone with access to personnel and information to start asking questions and requesting records. The ultimate step is to have this information released in a format that convinces the gatekeepers of science and information that it is genuine, which may be quite difficult.

Ultimately, we may be looking at a puzzle that has so many missing pieces that the human race has no real way to solve it at this point in history. The timetable on Disclosure may be up to the phenomenon itself. The problem is convincing someone with the proper clearances to find out what is known, and what is not. "Disclosure" may be an official admission that there is a mystery (not necessarily occasional visitations from ETs), and that it deserves serious attention from serious minds.

Platform For UFO Disclosure
10/21/07

Paul Kimball has nominated me to run for president over at his Other Side Of Truth blog. While this is of course fairly self-indulgent joking between friends, it reminds me of the famous question about "What would you do if you were president?"

Since this is not a political blog, we'll concentrate on the UFO question. Dick Cheney and Rudolph Giuliani have both been confronted with this subject on the campaign trail. Cheney said "Well if I had been briefed on it, I'm sure it was probably classified, and I couldn't talk about it." Giuliani, responding to a child's question about an alien attack last week in Exeter, NH, replied "If we're properly prepared for anything that happens, we'll be prepared for that."

Obviously, the UFO subject is not very high on the list of anyone running for public office, and it never will be, unless the phenomenon itself decides to make it important to the vast majority of the public.

Elected officials need to work within the structure of military and security establishments to find out what is going on, how much is known, and what the problem would be exposing this knowledge to the public. The way to force disclosure, I believe, is to convince those who hold those secrets that it would be in their best interests to release the pertinent

information. That would be a tall order indeed–perhaps nearly impossible. For anyone whose life is the custodianship of secrets within secrets, ad infinitum, an open approach is dead on the launchpad.

No, the proper way to do it would be behind the scenes, assuring the parties involved that no one but yourself and the people hired to speak for you would be responsible for revealing whatever could be revealed. Perhaps a political runaround would be in order, where you placed the information in the hands of a political adversary or even an ally, letting him or her take the heat and/or acclaim. Working on elected officials from the outside certainly isn't paying any fast dividends.

Because I believe (and this is only a theory) that those in charge of UFO information know little more about the origin or purpose of non-human visitors than the rest of us, I also think that a real "disclosure" is not possible, since those in possession of the story don't really know what to do with it, except scare the rest of us into submission by leaking wild stories and controlling the rumor mill. Perhaps the best way to look into it is on an individual level–using a "bottom-up" approach, rather than asking for official permission to spout the things we claim to know already.

Most people reading this already believe that the human race has had contact with non-human entities, or at least their effects. Why do we need some "authority" to tell us something we already know, except to provide some needed data points?

I stumbled onto that by writing it. Data points (meaning officially sanctioned, reputation-on-the-line data points) may be a key. If the some of the disclosure people (and many other UFO researchers) push their "we told you so" egos out of the way, perhaps what they should really be asking for (quietly and with little fanfare) is more and better info, and not a release of the "truth" about UFOs. What you are looking for defines what you will find, and how you ask the questions.

I will now take questions from the press.

What The Thinker Thinks…
5/12/09

In his book *Prometheus Rising*, Robert Anton Wilson coined an aphorism that those interested in the paranormal should keep in mind. He

wrote “What the thinker thinks, the prover proves.” He explained that many people will form an idea of their opinions based on simple guessing and belief systems, and go about “proving” a hypothesis based on the original belief, rather than a reasonable and logical examination of the available data that may negate their original position. He also pointed out that scientists and other supposedly logical thinkers are just as prone to this malady as the rest of us.

Dean Radin has just pointed me to a site that deals with “skepticism of skeptics,” or as I have called them (I think more properly) “fundamentalist skeptics.” Skeptical Investigations is an information source for those who are critical of scientific dogmatists like Martin Gardner, Richard Dawkins and James Randi.

It seems as if these personalities get the lion’s share of media coverage, just as those in the UFO and paranormal fields who make extraordinary claims always seem to do. This is because people who tend to reserve judgment and equivocate their statements are not usually considered worthy of attention. We get what we ask for (at least for the great majority of the population who may not have any interest in inquiry and/ or are interested only in conclusions) in the sense that features and programs about the paranormal seem to be either “for” or “against” the issue. Open-ended examinations are so rare as to be almost nonexistent.

Of course, if we had no opinion of an issue we wouldn’t go about looking for data to support it, but the problem arises when people are faced with multiple examples of apparently reliable data that seem to negate their original position. Many will ignore the contrary information in blind pursuit of something they “know” to be true. That is the “thinker”s blind belief which stops the evolution of knowledge. When faced with issues like UFOs, psychic phenomena, and unproven animals, there appears to be a significant backlog of anecdotal information that deserves more inquiry. More information comes in every day that either proves we are hopelessly delusional or mistaken, or that there is a core of unknowns that call for disciplined research, or research into new disciplines that advance understanding.

Anecdotal reporting on the paranormal does deserve serious study by serious minds. People are seeing things in the sky, popping out of lakes and floating through old houses as well as performing feats that defy current

understanding. Some of these accounts appear to defy current conventional explanations.

Walk In Someone Else's Shoes
6/15/09

While talking to Peter Robbins last night on my show *Radio Misterioso* and with Nick Redfern this morning, the subject of believability came up. Asked about his 30 years of work with abduction researcher Budd Hopkins, and the wild stories that he and Hopkins had studied, Robbins said that it was easy for him to conclude that there was some sort of alien presence on the planet, and that "they" were interested in our physical and emotional makeup.

To most people, the idea of aliens coming from other planets and taking people in the dead of night for sperm samples and breeding programs seems far-fetched. It is. When someone makes a claim that is within almost anyone's ability to experience, there are ways to check on it. UFO abductions do not fall into this category. There is no everyman yardstick to measure this against.

Yet people report strange encounters over periods of years and sometimes generations that sometimes defy conventional explanations. Where is the yardstick for perception of the anomalous? By definition, "anomalous" events are outside the ability of most people to experience on demand. Collared with this definition, abductions, UFO sightings, cryptids, ESP and ghosts are left in the "maybe" box for most people.

Those who choose to study these subjects have a huge uphill battle on their hands if they decide to convince others that things outside of our current understanding do in fact exist and are worthy of scrutiny. That is probably why many who have been looking into paranormal mysteries are either never heard from or drop out of the public eye after awhile, and some of these individuals have privately expressed some of the more profound revelations about the subject.

I once spoke to a researcher who used his own system of study to gather information and make educated guesses about what is important and what is best ignored. His method would sound very strange and unreliable to many people who consider themselves intelligent and methodical. In a sense, he

was advocating inspired guessing and “non-linear deduction” as valuable tools. It wasn’t as simple as that, but the basic idea sounded a bit like evocational magick, such as the kind practiced by western occultists, although he was not a member of any group. The idea was to present your findings after the mundane and formal research has been done. The “inspired guessing” involved as much effort and background work as any normal method. It also resembled a sort of zen reasoning, inasmuch as the paranormal may be like a meta-koan for existence.

This is one example of why I got into this crazy stuff in the first place. This sort of wackiness is not taught in schools, and it shouldn’t be, but I find it fascinating and valuable in my personal quests.

Robbins (and most others) don’t work like this as far as I know, but in his case the concatenation of years of exposure to strange stories which seem to have an internal consistency will often have an effect on your ideas about reality and the world. An offhanded question from a friend or stranger about “this UFO stuff” and your beliefs is hard to answer in a way that the questioner would like to hear, and without sounding like a kook.

The problem is that the researcher has been delving into the issue for many years, and the twists of mind and personal revelations are almost impossible to explain to others who have not trodden the same path. This becomes even more difficult when people want a sound-bite version of how you come to your conclusions. Of course, this is no excuse for anything but a complete and well-researched presentation to those who are not in the choir. The flip-side of this coin are arguments with those who have fixed ideas on something they cannot prove to anyone but themselves and those who agree with them, and are driven by transparently emotional motivations. This sort of willful stupidity is particularly annoying.

Since we are dealing with subjects that are not generally agreed upon as “real,” there is perhaps no good way to convince a reasonably intelligent and unbiased person that the anomalous is worthy of serious consideration and study. All it presents us with are questions, many of which may never be answered.

That doesn’t mean that we shouldn’t try, and remember that we should be looking for answers that satisfy our personal curiosity first. Issues of whether to share this publicly are up to our own discernment. Once someone goes public, they are automatically put in a position to defend

themselves, which may derail the original inspiration and end up as an emotional issue or worse, a crusade.

This essay was supposed to be an introduction to a book on alternate UFO theories. I never wrote the book, but in 2015, my good friend Kenn Thomas published it in the on-demand version of his legendary 'zine Steamshovel Press.

ET Go Home

If you can't at least consider the possibility that the human race has been involved in some sort of interaction with a non-human intelligence for a great deal of recorded history, you may stop reading now. The thousands of reports and accounts of gods, aliens, djinn, fairies, tricksters and other entities that pop up through the ages might be wishful thinking, or there is something very weird going on. If nothing else, it is far more interesting to consider the latter possibility.

Bring up UFOs at a party and almost everyone will be interested, but mention it to a reporter or academic (i.e. those whom we trust to define what is reality) and you will most likely get a snide comment and a quick change of subject. Serious people do not take UFOs seriously, at least on the record. Off the record there are some surprising exceptions, but the fact remains that there is no real safe harbor for enlightened discussion of the subject, short of private, informal conversation.

Most people are at least partially interested in the subject of Unidentified Flying Objects. Most of us have an opinion; whether it is real or not, whether aliens exist, or have interacted with us directly. It is a compelling subject and ripe for speculation. It also holds a mirror up to the human experience since it is apparently something external to us which at its source seems to possess a self-awareness and intelligence, that is if you accept that something is actually happening.

Even if you don't, there is nevertheless very good evidence that we have had contact with something non-human and intelligent and have been for hundreds of years—even several millennia if we are willing to accept the accounts and myths of ancient cultures. Sufficient study of literally

thousands of accounts leaves most reasonable people little option but to accept that something is going on. Most can at least consider that there is a genuine mystery involved, whether it originates from within or outside of us, or indeed in a combination of the two.

But in our public discourse, there is a huge leap of logic here that most have not noticed. The conclusion that the phenomenon known as UFOs is caused by aliens is premature and narrow. Contrary to what you have been led to believe, there is no real reason to conclude that we are being visited by beings from other planets. In spite of this, whole industries, organizations and egos are built on that assumption. When the latest stories of lights in the sky are aired or written about, every single account reported in the media brings up the ubiquitous people from other planets.

That belief has kept us running in circles for decades. It has become the only way to talk about the subject, with no more evidence than our ingrained expectations. Something that should be leading us into new areas of exploration by its very strangeness is locked into a prison that we have built for it. Speculation on the nature of UFOs and our ideas and interactions with the enigma are pregnant with possibilities, but the jokes and dogma try desperately to keep the monster at bay.

Perhaps it is time to jailbreak the UFOs. There is willful ignorance amongst many of those claiming to be interested in solving the mystery, and it has slammed the doors to new ideas. There are many flaws in reasoning and the most of the modern study of UFOs is a history of wishful thinking run rampant. It can and should be a serious subject for serious minds and not a group that many people consider little more than hobbyists.

Discoveries in physics, aero- and astronautics, biology and psychology are routinely ignored by UFO pundits and writers. Looking over the vast backlog of raw data from witnesses from over 60 years of sightings and encounters, it should be plain that a different way of thinking about UFOs is in order, if we are to get anywhere near unraveling this modern mystery.

The Extraterrestrial Hypothesis or ETH as it is known, is a viable, logical theory, but does not account for all the data, and if you are looking for a hypothesis that stands up to objective scrutiny, you must let the theory fit the data and not the other way around. Unbeknownst to most UFO fans and luminaries, there are relatively new ideas in physics (known collectively as “m-brane” theory) that actually support the idea that beings can travel almost instantaneously to the Earth from distant planets, but they

are only theories with no experimental evidence as yet to back them up, and once again, they do not fit much of the reported data spanning decades or centuries, at least not in any way that makes logical sense to us.

We cannot produce a UFO or alien on demand, and that makes it difficult to study. It also turns off a vast majority of intelligent people who could make inroads to solving the riddle. Actually we can produce the *experience* of "alien contact" with reasonable regularity, although it doesn't make many people very happy. We'll get back to that one.

In the study of UFOs, we have seen promising novelty largely ignored and stupidity routinely enshrined in servitude to the herding instinct and other social pressures. The human desire for acceptance never produces anything of value to the race, and the 60-odd year-old Ufology club has not changed its popular tune one iota (at least in the United States) since its inception. Paradoxically, some of the most interesting thoughts about the subject emerged among individuals and smaller groups in the early years of serious research, but this explosion of creativity often occurs before ideas are codified and made into dogma.

The question of the UFOs should make us curious. It should bring out the best in novel thinking and creativity. It should shed light on our own existence and how we solve problems. It's time to bring out these ignored ideas and cheerlead them into the pubic discourse. Even if we don't actually solve the mystery to anyone's complete satisfaction, we can at least have some fun.

Instead of looking at the screen, what I want to do is to turn around and look the other way. When we look the other way what we see is a little hole at the top of the wall with some light coming out. That's where I want to go. I want to steal the key to the projectionist's booth, and then, when everybody has gone home, I want to break in.

– Jacques Vallée, *Confrontations* 1990

When someone says "Do you believe in UFOs?" what they are really saying is "Do you believe that alien lifeforms from other planets are visiting Earth in spaceships?" This unfortunate shorthand shuts us off from any further debate. We have a ready-made mental file in which to stuff UFOs. Most of us have it in the same filing cabinet that includes ghosts, ESP, the Loch Ness Monster and Bigfoot. There are actually similarities in these

subjects that range beyond the obvious, but this categorization disease is insidious.

This filing of strange information into the back of small boxes in the deep recesses of our minds ends the debate before it's even started. Maybe this is aided by the very way we describe our perceptions and memories. It has been proven that our language determines how we think about things, and for all of its variety, the normal use of the English language is based around what we know, or what we think we know.

For example, take this statement:

WATER BOILS AT 100 DEGREES CELSIUS

Most people would think that this is an irrefutable statement, but it would be untrue if you tried it on the surface of Mars. It could be more accurate to say that the boiling point of water is 100 degrees celsius at sea level on the planet Earth. We could refine our terms further by stating that the temperature at which the vapor pressure of water equals the environmental pressure surrounding the water is the boiling point. The average atmospheric pressure on any other planet would cause water to boil at a different temperature. This is an easy case of defining our terms, but it shows that we make a lot of assumptions in the normal use of the English language.

When a few assumptions and vaguely-defined words are added to the mix, things can get tricky. The statement

UFOs ARE ALIENS COMING FROM OTHER PLANETS

…is taken as gospel by UFO enthusiasts (and Hollywood screenwriters, among others) but it contains several assumptions and leaps of logic and faith:

UFO stands for Unidentified Flying Object. The term was coined by the United States Air Force in the early 1950s to refer to the strange reports that kept pouring in from military and civilian witnesses. It is (and should be) a neutral term. Something is seen in the sky, it is apparently flying, and it cannot be readily identified. Simple enough, but most of us assume

(whether though deeply-held belief or for convenience) that "UFO" means a structured, piloted craft from other planets. This leap of faith must be eliminated of we want to stop chasing our semantic tails.

"Are" is a horrible word to use when dealing with unknowns. It is the plural form of the verb "to be" and removes all doubt in a subject that is filled with doubt. "True UFOs are still a mystery" might be a fair use of the verb.

"Aliens" is perhaps the most insidious word in the sentence. At this point in history, at least if you are exposed to any sort of media such as the news, movies, fiction or UFO books, aliens are defined as conscious, physical life forms from planets other than Earth. The popular image has changed over the last 50 years from humanoids with green or blue or some other non-scheduled skin tone to the ubiquitous giant-eyed grey being, thanks in great part to the cover painting on Whitley Strieber's 1987 book, *Communion*. The aliens manifest as physical beings in our thoughts and reports because our minds do best when dealing with things that inhabit the same three-dimensional space that our conscious awareness operates in every day. It also guides the majority of our public discourse, since any deviation from this convention starts to become dangerously subjective. There is as much evidence that these "aliens" are coming from inner space as other galaxies, but that does not necessarily mean that we are always hallucinating them.

"Coming from" implies transportation through space from one place to another. No one has ever seen or tracked any craft traveling through space to our planet, at least no one who is at liberty to tell us about it. The UFOs appear in our skies and if some accounts and video from the space program are to be believed (or interpreted a such) in the space above the Earth. According to some branches of recent theoretical physics, anyone who wants to travel here may not have to actually spend several years hurtling thorough space at near light speeds, so this part of the statement could be seen as fairly straightforward.

"Other planets" identifies the origin of the supposed "aliens." We have encountered no evidence as yet for any life on other planets. Of course, that doesn't mean we won't some day discover a way of detecting if there is intelligent life elsewhere. According to many cultural traditions (even some western-based varieties) what is perceived as non-human consciousness does not necessarily originate from other worlds.

Words and grammar often reinforce a way of viewing the world that is linear and logical. UFOs are anything but linear or logical. Based on many reports, what they seem to be trying to do is to break us of our mental habits by throwing a wrench into our assumptions.

Presumptions have kept us locked in a vicious circle because most of us don't even realize that we're in it. It would be nice to crack this circle so that we can move into the larger world of logic, interesting ideas and fun speculation. We might even begin to meet the phenomenon of UFOs more on its own terms (or at least without us getting in our own way.)

In 2009, Kevin Randle claimed that he and his generation of UFO researchers had "solved" the mystery. Through interviews with UFO witnesses, "Roswell Incident" participants, government insiders and "common sense," Randle said that the case had been convincingly made for extraterrestrial origin. Randle's statement (and the underpinnings of the belief systems of all major UFO groups and fans) is based solely on witness testimony, a handful of cases of inconclusive physical evidence and photo/video images that occasionally show something very out of the ordinary. In spite of protests to the contrary, all that can be that proven so far is Carl Jung's 1958 statement on the subject, "Things are seen, but one does not know what."

In the 1890s, a wave of so-called "airship" sightings swept the United States. Out of many accounts (some of which were proven as hoaxes by newspaper writers) came a story of a farmer who approached a landed craft and was asked for the time by a bearded, steampunky crewmember. "It's eleven-thirty' he said. The aeronaut replied "You lie. It is one o'clock." This theater of the absurd runs throughout the history of encounters with weird flying objects and is our first clue that things are not as they seem, or perhaps more importantly, the way we want them to seem.

In 1967, Nebraska patrolman Herbert Schirmer claimed an encounter with military-like beings on a strange craft. When he finished his tour of their ship, they bid him farewell with this cryptic statement: "We want you to believe in us, but not too much." If UFO study is to evolve without continuing as a self-ingratiating mutual admiration society with a persecution complex, we need to stop believing our own stories and try some new ones.

One prominent UFO researcher and theorist recently proposed (and possibly carried out) an experiment that tried to change the phenomenon by

attempting to actively influence it through human intervention. It is not reported if anything of significance was achieved, but this sort of out-of-the-box thinking is almost completely absent from the field. Just a few years ago, a small group was involved in using the psychoactive substance DMT to try and interact with any extra-human intelligences that they might encounter, based on the scientific research of Dr. Rick Strassman, who discovered that his test subjects were having spontaneous encounters with apparent “aliens” while under the influence of the drug. Like the previous experiment, the UFO group did not publicly announce if anything was achieved.

Perhaps any results of experiments like these should not be revealed until small groups of people quietly sharing their findings can be sure of reasonably repeatable results. Perhaps the best result of this kind of active research would be something that anyone can try for themselves. The outcomes would probably be as individual as the people performing the experiments, but if most could achieve some sort of breakthrough, a quiet revolution in thinking about the subject might happen.

These two ideas are simple and testable for any reasonably intelligent and diligent individual or group and are just a couple of examples of how the UFO field could be imbued with new life. We would be moving into mostly uncharted territory here, but isn’t that what we want? The age of the big UFO groups and conventions, celebrity, etc. should be over by now, and it is holding back independent thinking. The new ideas will come from small groups and individuals doing sometimes outlandish things and taking the hidden and forbidden paths into the future.

That should excite almost anyone.

7 - Throwing Stuff At The Wall/ Running It Up The Flagpole etc.:Theory

In theory there is no difference between theory and practice. In practice, there is.

– Yogi Berra

UFOmystic provided me with a mental workshop to process some ideas about UFOs and the paranormal that had been running around in my head. In the course of three years, subjects ranged from the emotional component of sightings to musings on what an alien mind might think or think of us to psychedelic drugs and beyond.

After all of this, what is now interesting to me is the fact that all UFO and other paranormal events are perceived and recorded by the human mind. We may have a video or radar return or marks on the ground, but the majority of sightings and encounters are solely a recalled event encoded in a story that the witness tells us and him/herself. This of course induces bias, confablulation, interpretation and faulty memories. "Objective" instruments occasionally tell us that there was something there, but our minds add an additional level of meaning. There is no objective evidence (at least publicly acceptable, repeatable-on-demand evidence) that we are being visited by aliens from other planets, so we should keep our minds and options open.

The most likely scenario to me at this time is that we are dealing with something that is so ephemeral from our point of view that our minds are ripe for creating anything to grasp onto, even if we do this subconsciously.

A quick look at the literature (such as Albert Rosales' excellent online Humanoid Sighting Reports *database) reveals countless apparent lifeforms which are encountered, most of which are squarely based on earthly concepts of what life should look like. The incredible variety of sightings either means that we are being visited by literally thousands of civilizations, or witnesses are seeing things that are interpreted individually. Counting out hoaxes, misidentifications, and the usual fundamentalist skeptic excuses for all strange phenomena, we are left with a puzzle that has continued to resist all attempts to identify itself and become part of our common knowledge.*

Dad, Where Do UFOs Come From?
7/17/2007

In Michael Talbot's seminal book *The Holographic Universe*, we find a clue to secrets about the UFO problem which mainstream Ufology has ignored. Talbot, looking at the work of physicists like Alain Aspect and David Bohm, posits that reality, the universe, and everything is akin to an infinite hologram, in which all things contain complete information about all other things.

What physicists call the "quantum field," is also the "collective unconscious" of Jung, where archetypes arise, and where spontaneous and

simultaneous events occur, independent of distance. Western occultists are convinced that this realm is where everything we experience (both in waking and dream states) resides, but we are only seeing and sensing a small piece of what it truly "is." This "dimension" is not bound by time, space or our attempts to understand and more importantly, to explain it. Language traps us in a conceptual web of illusions, at least as far as this symbolic realm is concerned. We may imagine that our reality could be a sort of shadow or epiphenomenon of this holographic dimension, looked at through a mental web of expectations, sensory input, and our illusory flow through time.

I would like to suggest that this is where the intelligence behind the UFO phenomenon "resides." Perhaps this intelligence is dependent on the observer for its form and appearance. Maybe the ufonauts are implicit in this realm or hologram or idea-space, and need only other sentient intelligences to bring them into being. The interaction becomes the existence. What I am trying to get across here is that at least part of the UFO "problem" may be in our heads. Most of us, through cultural conditioning and input from our senses look at the physical universe as parts or pieces of some sort of infinite "machine."

Nuts-and-bolts types will say that all of this psychological junk is fine in theory, but how does it explain physical traces, effects on the immediate environment, implants, and marks on abductees' bodies? It doesn't, unless you open your thinking up and consider how a non-localized intelligence could interact with us on basic levels that as yet, we barely understand. Since there is really no incontrovertible evidence that we are being visited by aliens from other planets, other than what we expect and how things appear to us, we should be able to hypothesize without being wed to one idea.

Where Might Aliens Come From?
11/01/2007

Many of those involved in the study of UFOs, as well as dilettantes and other interested parties make the assumption that UFO = ET. We won't belabor the point, since it's been done intelligently elsewhere.

Unfortunately, it's the model that drives all popular views, which in turn affects the entire conversation.

Based on a debate between Mac Tonnies and Paul Kimball over aliens and how they would reveal themselves to humanity, I was struck with an idea that I have been kicking around and evolving over a few years.

For this "recipe," I took ingredients from (among others) Keith Thompson, Jacques Vallée, Aliester Crowley, Jim Brandon, John Keel, Rick Strassman, Israel Regardie, Dean Radin, Whitley Strieber, Robert Anton Wilson, William Burroughs, Terence McKenna, Kenneth Ring, Michael Talbot, Timothy Leary, Alan Watts, Charles Bowen, Jim Keith, Dr. Mario Pazzaglini, a few contactees, conversations remembered and forgotten, and simmered all of this for about 15 years.

What I come up with is this: What if the "aliens" are not coming from other star systems, from the inner earth, or even other "dimensions" (whatever that means)? What if they exist because of us? The "Other" (for that is all I can call it) is there, but it has no reason to enter our world except for the fact we are here, incarnate in a four-dimensional world, with our ideas about reality. To them, there is no yesterday or tomorrow, there is only being–right now. Like the catechism of a deity who creates mankind in order to experience physical incarnation, this Other needs us to look at another form of existence to have something with which to compare its experience. It may look at us as a sort of time machine or tuning mechanism. From our point of view, the place that the Other inhabits either non-existent or codified in such inaccurate terms as "heaven," "hell," or the state of "samsara."

Our need to explain things and work them into our view of the universe does not allow for a discarnate intelligence, which takes on an infinite number of forms and manifestations. This may be why UFO entities don't seem to follow any set patterns. They appear to come and go like fads. Perhaps the codification of the "grey" (anchored by the image on the cover of *Communion*) has stuck us in our present view of the Other.

This is why I often think that there is nothing for world governments to "disclose" about UFOs. These concepts (if they are anywhere near the "truth") do not lend themselves to easy explanations of aliens coming from other planets. How do you explain or control something that relies on individual perception and expectation? There are no boxes to put them in and no way to control when and where it will appear next. The sightings

around military installations may be a result of our own fear and paranoia, which draws this Other like moths to an emotion-fueled flame.

In this vein, I am reminded of something which was apparently buzzed to author Whitley Strieber years ago. He was told about a 1950s government report which warned that the aliens relied on belief to gain a foothold in our world–the more people disbelieved in their existence, the less chance they had of taking over.

Another quote that comes to mind was supposedly told to Patrolman Herbert Schirmer at the end of an abduction experience in the 1960s. The humanoid-appearing entities left him with this piece of advice: "We want you to believe in us, but not too much."

I may be screwing things up by just thinking about it, if you get my meaning.

Making UFO Sense Often Sucks
7/01/2007

We just got back from a screening of David Lynch's latest film *INLAND EMPIRE*, and it occurred to me that there is something that we can learn from art and the creative process when delving into UFOs and other associated weirdness.

One film festival presenter reportedly introduced Lynch with the line, "He's a genius. I think." One of the main reasons for his "genius" is because he increasingly does not allow his conscious, reasoning right brain mind to get in the way of telling a story that wells up from the primordial akashic "soup" through his subconscious and onto the screen. This is one of the great goals of all successful art. Lynch also studiously avoids explaining anything to his audience and interviewers. Like Schrodinger's quantum cat, he realizes that the minute he "collapses the wave function" of the creative message with an "explanation," the work of art is ceases to speak to much of its audience–the cat is dead (or alive, but the question is not open anymore.)

The source and meaning of truly "unexplained" UFOs seems to be hidden, and will likely remain that way for quite some time. It will reveal itself to us when we are ready, or when *it* is. Many UFO cases, if looked at

from a symbolic perspective, reveal more to our humanness than simple questions about "where the aliens come from and what they're doing here."

A short look at a classic UFO case, from the perspective of a symbolic work of "art" may be in order. How about the Joe Simonton case from Eagle River, Wisconsin, 1961? Simonton was in his house making breakfast when he was summoned outside by a noise "like tires on wet pavement." Hovering over his driveway was a round object about twelve feet high and thirty feet in diameter. A "hatch" opened on the side and Simonton peered in to see three men in close-fitting uniforms. One was apparently cooking something on a flameless grill. Most of the inside of the craft was a dull, matte-black. One of the men motioned that he wanted Simonton to fill a metal jug (which was handed to him) with water. This he did and gave it back to the strange man. He was given three "pancakes" hot off the grill before the thing closed up and flew off over the pine trees.

Any attempt to interpret this episode logically obviously falls flat. Many have tried, but it's a dead end. If we hypothesize a bit on the basic elements of the story, we can come up with a few interesting things:

1) The thing apparently came from, and went back to, the sky. Many things we associate with gods, unseen forces, and the unknown reside in the heavens.

2) The men didn't say a word to Simonton. Talking about things often robs them of open interpretation and ultimate personal meaning. Many religious disciplines stress the value of silence.

3) He was given three plain (they turned out to be ordinary wheat gluten) flat wafers. I do not need to emphasize the symbolism of holy wafers and the more widespread act of ingesting food and drink that is alleged to have mystic powers.

4) The outer part of the "craft" was "brighter than chrome" according to Simonton, while the interior was black. The "men" were dressed in black outfits with black caps. Shining truth on the outside contrasted with occulted, secretive black on the inside brings up images of spiritual promise contrasted with more difficult to grasp truths contained within any path to true understanding.

This is just a quick overview of the Simonton episode, but the Ufonauts may be hitting closer to home in some cases than we usually think. Other famous cases (like the Mothman story) are even richer in symbolism, particularly of the darker side of human and spiritual experience. This is

only one attempt to "interpret" the UFO puzzle, but it is offered as a simple example of what can be done once we stop trying to pigeonhole the subject into one scenario. Others may (and will) go further.

A great volume in this vein is the rare title *Cyberbiological Studies of the Imaginal Component in the UFO Contact Experience*, which may also be the longest title in UFO book history. Pay any price if you can find it.

This is probably one of the few (or only) ideas/theories that I dealt with that I could not find elsewhere in the UFO literature. It may be the first time that the idea was proposed in this format. Since the original posting, others have taken this premise and run with it. That's a good thing.

Are UFOs A Cosmic Art Project?
9/29/2007

For the past couple of years, I have been giving a lecture called "The 1950s UFO Contactees: Charlatans, or Unrecognized Art Movement?" In the talk, I discuss the activities of the Contactees and their prodigious output of writing, drawings, paintings and artifacts, and how these can be considered creative ways to get a message across. Looked at in this context, it does not matter whether the inspiration comes from space people, from their own imagination, or a combination of the two.

A broad overview of the history of UFO sightings and contact can be examined in the same way, but the problem becomes what the message (if any) could be. Most people (at least those interested in the subject) would say that aliens are here and have been visiting us since at least the late 1940s. Some go further and insist that these aliens are intimately interested in our politics, religion, and even our DNA. None of this has ever been proven in a way that most of the human race would accept as unquestionable proof. That leaves us where ufology is today. It has not changed in 60 years. That's a long time for something to remain unanswered, especially something as ubiquitous as UFOs.

Perhaps the reason we are not getting anywhere is that we almost always choose to look at the problem from the perspective of a society where science has answered most of our questions about our world and the

universe. It's a great tool, but not the only one in our box. We should take a look at others that may be just as valid, but not as obvious.

Humans express themselves in a variety of ways. When we look at razor-sharp pictures beamed to us from another planet, many of us are amazed and inspired that the human race could accomplish such a thing. We can also see a great painting, or hear a piece of music and this affects us in other, but similar ways. Things that light up the circuits of our left or right brain can touch us. The best ones may be stimulating both.

This is one of my favorite paintings: *The Annunciation* by Sandro Botticelli, painted in 1490. It's a subject that was treated by many Italian Renaissance artists–specifically the moment when an angel is telling Mary that she will become pregnant with Jesus. It's a good example of the right/left brain dichotomy and synthesis. The composition is centered emotionally and physically on the space between the outstretched hands. The vanishing point of the lines in the floor tiles lead right to it. A variety of concentric circles outlined by Mary's body and the wings of the angel radiate outward from this point as well. What Botticelli was trying to do was to entertain, teach, inspire, and enlighten the viewer, when painting and sculpture were the only visual games in town, and Roman Catholicism was the biggest game in philosophy.

Woman With A Guitar by Georges Braque–1913

One more. This one shows how far we had come by the turn of the 20th century, and artists were breaking with traditional ways of seeing. We still see a representation of objects–a guitar, a newspaper, a table–but Braque is taking a two-dimensional surface and playing with space, time and emotion in that limited space. Things move and perspectives change. We concentrate on the things that interest us. When we examine the painting, we realize that there is a lot more going on when we look at something than just a frozen moment in time.

The intelligence (and there is almost definitely one) behind the UFO enigma may be doing something similar to these artists. When a witness sees something flitting through the sky (or perhaps closer) s/he is often forced to at least temporarily suspend what they think about "reality." Some cases (like certain great art works) achieve a permanent shift in the witness' worldview. It's strange that most researchers choose to ignore this aspect of the UFO experience.

We can now see how artists interpret things and how they teach us to look at our world in a different way (I knew that art history degree would come in handy some day.) The point is that non-human intelligences (in cases where they may exist) might be trying to teach us a few things about how we look at our reality by screwing around with it.

When a witness encounters a glowing whatchamacallit on a lonely road at night, and it is close enough to see that it is obviously not something man-made, a lot of assumptions are called into question. This is of course not unlike the effect that the best artworks have on us, be they visual,

musical, or literary. There is most likely a lot going on in a witness' mind during a sighting, such as: "What the hell is that?" "Is it going to hurt me/take me away?" "Are there more of them?" "Should I run away?" Admittedly, this is not the same as a passive viewing of something that merely asks for our attention, but look at what is happening here: Just by its very presence, the UFO or aliens or whatever is seen is forcing its audience to take notice and make a decision about the nature of the encounter. In a way, many UFO encounters cause an effect that any artist would love to have over his/her audience.

The history of the UFO enigma shows that the exhibit is always changing, at least in the 20th/21st century popular mind (I am not dealing with ancient accounts, airship "contactees" etc. because human communication has not always allowed things to develop at the pace we know at this point in history.) Since the late 1940s, UFOs have gone from mere objects skittering around the sky to landing, opening up and spitting out what appear to be humanoid beings (and other things), approaching the witness and communicating (many times in a nonsensical way), and finally, forcing people into alleged intrusive medical examinations, among other things. Someone really wants to improve their hit rate.

Perhaps the hippest of the UFO art cognoscenti were the Contactees, who were into it before almost everyone else. They gave birth to their own offshoot movement that riffed on the UFO message to a select crowd of eager believers. There they were, right alongside the beatniks, with a new-age take on the beat philosophy: "The world is about to blow itself up, but the Space Brothers are going to deus ex machina our butts right into the saucers." Unfortunately this did not need to happen, since much of the cosmic brotherhood message was adopted by the much larger and more boring hippie movement, which virtually wiped out the Contactees in the mid-1960s.

Before this could happen though, a mixed-race couple from Massachusetts reported a meeting with Ufonauts in a spaceship, and the message was decidedly not sweetness and light. In 1963, Betty and Barney Hill were used in a new "exhibit" to tell the world that the UFO enigma was once again changing its creative arc. (Actually, it's strange and funny that their abduction occurred right smack in the middle of the Flintstones run on ABC, which might also be part of some cosmic joke or synchronicity.)

Throughout the modern history of flying saucers, there has of course also been an undercurrent of the sinister. The Men In Black made their appearance as early as the Maury Island case, when shadowy men visited witness Harold Dahl, telling him to shut up about the episode. They may also have caused his son to run away from home, with no apparent memory of where he had been. Most readers are familiar with the most famous book on the subject, *Flying Saucers and the Three Men*, written in 1962 by UFO enthusiast and sci-fi/horror fan Albert K. Bender. One only has to look at his mindset to see why he chose (subconsciously or not) to view the phenomenon as a sort of shocking drama.

Whatever it is that is behind the UFOs (and other assorted subjects we assign to the category of the "paranormal") do not want to be pigeonholed. To those that pay attention, the "art exhibit" is ever-changing, and hits close to home: fear, joy, wonder, inquisitiveness, and of course sex are all part of the UFO mix.

So the non-human intelligences knocking at our collective consciousness may have no other message than "look," or "think," or perhaps even "you don't know everything." Ultimately, what the UFO subject does is throw a mirror in front of us and ask us to look at what we are, and how we perceive our reality, which is of course one of the things that great art is supposed to do.

UFO Belief And Cognitive Dissonance
5/13/2007

What happens when you have to change your view of "how things are?" A friend recently told me that he is having problems with the sort of revelations that seem almost commonplace in the UFO/ intelligence game: the phenomenon of government agents who announce that there is in fact a non-human presence on this planet. Like many others who have gone through this experience, he thinks that the opinion of a seemingly sane person with government credentials holds more weight than other sources. Maybe it does. For those who disbelieve in the concept of extraterrestrial aliens visiting this planet, this is sometimes a tough one. There are only so many people you can label as crazy.

For an intelligent person who weighs all strong evidence before coming to conclusions, there is no simple answer. What many of the "insiders" who leak supposed UFO information to the public are counting on are researchers and their audience who already have an unshakeable belief in the idea that there are extraterrestrial beings visiting us and that there is a dark secret about this fact being held by those in power. This can be everything from some sort of agreement with an alien race to the idea that our best technological and spiritual advances came from these beings.

There is of course no firm proof of this. Certainly there are very compelling reasons to consider that something that is not human interacts with us occasionally. There is also quite a bit of evidence that the military and intelligence communities are aware of this presence. Past these simple and uncomplicated ideas, there seems to be no reason that any reasonable person would waste their reputations, time, or sanity making any definitive statements about the UFO subject based on leaks from those who supposedly have access to classified information. The insider who seemingly has no agenda presents a thorny problem. "Yes, there are aliens here" he says, "and I know this to be true." He has no other information to impart–no stories of underground bases or abductions-for-technology deals. Should we believe him?

A useful way to keep one's sanity in this case is to create a few mental "boxes." Label one "True" the next one "False," and the last one "Maybe." For those with a need for certainty, this is difficult. The "True" box with regard to the UFO subject should be very small. The "False" box small as well, and as you have probably guessed, "Maybe" would dwarf the others. This allows anyone to consider the vast, insane spectrum of the paranormal without going over the edge into fevered pamphlet -writing or blogging. No matter where the information comes from, it must be considered in light of confirming evidence. If there isn't any yet, patience is a virtue.

"Maybe" is our friend, leading us through the dark forest of beliefs and allowing us to sample everything without the need to stop in one spot and take root. When "insiders" want to lace their message with disinfo for some purpose, they tend to steer clear of those with a capacity for suspended belief.

Insidious Creatures Of The Imaginal Realm

11/04/2007

In one of the comments to the "Where Do Aliens Come From?" post a reader linked to an online book by psychedelic researcher Jim DeKorne which reconfirmed a lot of my suspicions about this alien/ "other" dichotomy/connection.

What DeKorne finds in the available psychedelic literature is that not only do non-human entities appear to depend on us to bring them "into existence," but that their personalities and motives change with the dominant culture of the percipient. Perhaps the fact of our accelerating and often paranoia-inducing development is mirrored in our experiences with the "other." This is not a new idea by any means, but it confirms what many in who are interested in the imaginal realm have suspected for years.

It is also interesting to note that some of these entities will adopt a messianic attitude after informing the human percipient of some future event that appears to come true. This is quite similar to one of the methods used by government agents and disinformationalists to gain the trust of a "target" before loading him/ her up with useless garbage designed to lead them off the path that bothers the powers that be.

For some strange reason, I have a hard time believing that these "aliens" (or whatever they are) are all liars, bent on misleading us. It may be my attitude of hope and general optimism, which admittedly may blind me to the darker forms of human/non-human interaction, although I admit it's there. Perhaps the other realm is filled with things not unlike ourselves: some good, others not so much. This brings to mind the old "war in heaven" idea, which seems to make sense if you allow yourself some uninhibited theorizing.

Of course, this sort of stuff is not "provable" to the vast majority of the population, but it may hold one of the keys to unraveling the nearly undeniable existence of unseen realms populated with knots of existence possessed of some kind of self-awareness.

One quote that DeKorne pulls from the late psychedelic luminary Terence McKenna distills this all in one sentence: "It is no great accomplishment to hear a voice in the head. The accomplishment is to make sure that it is telling you the truth."

But how do you know what the "truth" is?

Why Don't Aliens Freak People Out?
9/22/2009

I wrote about the story of an Atomic Energy Commission official who was told that the Roswell Incident was an actual crash of technology that was not our own. At least that's what he said when researcher Robert Hastings asked him. But did he ask what the AEC official thought about the matter? Did the fact that one of his close friends in the military admit that alien races did in fact exist and had made it to Earth bother him in any way?

A few years ago, I worked on a documentary about government knowledge of UFOs. One of the producers interviewed many former officials who said that yes, UFOs were evidence of someone else's technology and that "aliens" existed in the way that most of us think (i.e. there are humanoid entities from other planets who have come here.) After a couple of months of this, he had a personal crisis in his belief structure because people whose backgrounds checked out and seemed reasonably sane had told him something he had previously thought was a myth.

We had to talk to him for a couple of days before he calmed down a bit. There was no real proof of anything he was told, and even if there was, what difference would it make? Even if aliens are here from time to time, people still go to work, pay their mortgages, fall in and out of love and basically go on with life.

He was probably going through the same mental struggle as some of his interviewees had done. What is that dark journey? Why don't countless government employees with supposed knowledge of an E.T. presence go completely nuts and start sending letters to elected officials, raving on websites, and standing on street corners clad only in sandwich boards with "THEY'RE HERE!!" printed on them in block letters?

Perhaps the reason for this is that they have been told that there is literally nothing that they or anyone else can do about it. This is the reason that I sometimes say that the government knows little more than the rest of us about this strange phenomenon known as UFOs. They may have much more data, but what do they do with it?

People have known for quite a while that there is very likely something non-human interacting with us occasionally. There have been attempts to

explain this presence through the cultural lens of the time, but there has never been any way to control it or predict when it would happen again. All we know is that it does.

Of course, humans can get used to anything. Wars force us to deal with death as a shadow lurking just offstage. Those in war zones can adapt to near-constant bombing and shooting. We are quite adaptable to just about any situation. Homo sapiens has a great mental capacity for dealing with stressful living.

Those who claim abduction by aliens perhaps form a special group. There appears to be little proof, however that the abduction phenomenon is connected to the UFO question as a whole. People have told stories about being spirited away by strange entities for eons. Why this should suddenly equal aliens from other planets is an open and debatable question.

Most people don't have to deal with anything of a paranormal nature in their lives. An occasional sensationalized report on UFOs and their occupants doesn't really concern most of us. If the phenomenon decided (if it can do that) to make itself known to everyone, we would adapt to that too. For now, it's just not something that people have to think about very much.

That goes for our government friends too. A personal encounter is usually a one-time event. Those with healthy psyches would integrate it into their worldview, mainly because it's not a daily concern.

The "aliens," if they exist, don't seem to care whether we believe in them or not. Perhaps they don't have an equivalent for the word. Things "are" and that's that. There is no timetable for "disclosure," no plans to reveal themselves, and no real concern over who sees them. Their existence likely appears as a cipher because of our perceptions, cultural conditioning and beliefs rather than any planned stealth on their part.

Perhaps this is what those on the "inside" are hiding from the rest of us. Disclosure would be admitting to ignorance and impotence. Those with special knowledge may know that doing something or doing nothing will ultimately have the same effect. It's always easier to do nothing, and maybe neither the "aliens" nor us have any common ground except some level of intelligence beyond animals. Perhaps our non-human friends are simply "existing" like birds or even insects. "Purpose" may be something we have grafted on to the situation to make it easier to try and understand. How do we cope with something that is almost totally outside of our frames of reference?

There are of course many reports of UFOs interacting with the military, specifically stories of nuclear weapon malfunctions and shutdowns. Perhaps the non-human intelligences are grafting our meaning onto their belief structure, if they have one. There is ample evidence that human interaction with UFOs is a highly reflexive phenomenon.

In light of all these musings, perhaps we should accept things as they are and not worry too much about conclusions that fade almost as quickly as they appear. As the late John Keel said, "To hell with the answer. What is the question?"

Alien Brains, Alien Thoughts
9/24/2009

A lively set of comments was engendered by the post about human reactions to a supposed "alien" presence. I wondered about one of my main points, which most seem to have missed (or perhaps I didn't express it properly.) The idea was that any supposed non-humans interacting with us may have developed or evolved in a completely different way than we would expect or even imagine.

On a promotional tour for *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* (which he directed) Leonard Nimoy was asked if he thought that whales were more intelligent than humans. (The plot of the film involved communication with humpback whales.) After a moment, Nimoy asked the press people to consider the concept that whales may not have evolved "ahead of" or "behind" us, but, as he put it, "off to the side."

This point is well taken. Many other intelligent species on Earth seem to have adapted to their environments and physical structure with just what they need to get along. Whales need to survive in a liquid environment, and propagate their species. They also seem to have a great capacity for learning new concepts to adapt to changing conditions. Their communications with each other are complicated and subtle, and have been proven to change over relatively short periods. The aesthetic value of the sounds is an untestable question in scientific terms. Since they have no real way to permanently manipulate their surroundings, the whales' purpose seems to be to live in relative harmony with their environment. They have adapted to their particular circumstances with supreme efficiency.

Their evolutionary path is different than ours, but it is probably debatable whether they are more or less advanced than us. It certainly depends on how the terms are defined. Things might have turned out differently if they had developed hands! For all we know, they may be arguing about the meaning of life with their complicated noises, in addition to mating calls, feeding calls, etc.

From a human point of view, the life of a whale seems like it could get pretty boring, but most animals never seem to be bored. Domestic pets might get restless, but that's because they have come to rely on their owners for stimulation, since most of their other needs are taken care of.

Insects have been found to have a rudimentary capacity for learning, even if the higher centers of their brains are rendered inoperative, so the ability to store and retrieve information exists in other forms of life as well. Who knows what evolutionary paths other animals may have taken? Given a billion more years, some species of bugs might be driving cars and building monoliths, but what will their motivations be? How could we even guess at their thoughts? For that matter, how do we know what other animals are thinking? Why does my cat freak out and run around the house every once in awhile? She may have a very good reason that would make no sense to me at all.

Given our propensity for building machines, some have hypothesized that we may eventually become more machine-like. Some of our behaviors have already adapted to accommodate to the devices that we invented to make our lives easier or more efficient. In his 1998 book *Darwin Among The Machines*, George Dyson wrote, "Everything that human beings are doing to make it easier to operate computer networks is at the same time, but for different reasons, making it easier for computer networks to operate human beings…. Darwinian evolution, in one of those paradoxes with which life abounds, may be a victim of its own success, unable to keep up with non-Darwinian processes that it has spawned."

Were these non-humans taken over by their own technology, or did they never develop any? What factors caused them to develop into what they are? Many reports say they have hands, or claws, or something that would enable tool use. Is this because we are seeing what we expect through the lens of our expectations? Taken as a whole, reports of non-human contact seem to make no sense, unless we buy into the "genetic manipulation" theory of abduction researchers. I have come to think that if the aliens had

problems with their genetics, they would know enough about it to have no need for humans, or cows for that matter.

Once again, we are laying our motivations and ideas onto the question. A shaman from the Amazon looking at a baseball game would likely have no idea what was going on, and perhaps more importantly, why, but it's still interesting to many. There is no real purpose for it. Our survival does not depend on it. So why do it?

The motivations for any supposed non-human race may be inscrutable beyond what we can even imagine. If we cannot meet them on any common cultural or philosophical grounds, their activities and very existence will remain a mystery.

These ideas are assumptions based on reports of something that as a race we cannot agree is really happening, but something has been causing people to report encounters with things that are not recognizable as human for thousands of years. How much of this is coming from our brains and how much is externally generated is, I think, subject to debate and lively speculation. New questions may push research in new directions.

UFOs As Agents Of Deconstruction
10/07/2009

In the Archaeus Project's 1989 journal *Cyberbiological Studies of the Imaginal Component In The UFO Contact Experience* Carl Raschke wrote an essay entitled "UFOs: Ultraterrestrial Agents of Cultural Deconstruction." Raschke offered the idea that the search for meaning behind the UFO enigma was caught up in cultural ideas about aliens coming from other planets in structured craft. He also proposed that whatever was behind the UFO problem was acting as a catalyst for change in cultural ideas about what was possible and even acceptable.

Raschke noted that, "…the UFO puzzle for both investigators and the public unfolds along a trajectory that Jacques Vallée terms that of 'recursive unsolvability.' In mathematics a recursive function is one in which the solution cannot be reached by a simple set of successive, linear operations, but is gained only by successive, partial tallies, each of which incrementally redefines the problem itself."

The UFO debate appears to surround a concept that is continually redefined by a set of partial answers that redefine the question. The end result is that the solution bears less relevance to the original query.

Most can agree that the UFO question has not been solved conclusively by anyone, and the introduction of new concepts like the abduction enigma, FOIA document searches and the recent rise of the disclosure movement have changed the focus and character of UFO study over the last 20-30 years. In the 1950s and '60s, "occupant" cases were dismissed by the mainstream research community as embarrassing and a distraction to the important issue of popularizing the idea that sightings of UFOs were enough to make the subject worthy of respectability and serious study.

With the 1967 publication of *Flying Saucer Occupants* by Coral and Jim Lorenzen, the idea of "piloted" UFOs was taken more seriously. The idea of abductions was virtually ignored from 1966 (when *Interrupted Journey* told the strange story of Betty and Barney Hill) until 1981, when Budd Hopkins' *Missing Time* was published, and got a real boost in 1987 with Whitley Strieber's *Communion*.

Each time a new concept was introduced, the UFO question was redefined. Are we simply discovering heretofore unrecognized aspects of the phenomenon, or does some symbiosis of reported observations occur, working sub-rosa in concert with expectations? I would argue that since we are dealing with something that is not amenable to controlled testing and repeatability at will, that expectations very likely play a role in defining the questions and any ultimate answer.

If there is an intelligence or intelligences behind the phenomenon, what it has been doing (probably for millennia) either looks like nonsense or some inscrutable attempt to change human thinking and perception. The very exposure to a UFO or occupant sighting is enough to rearrange one's concepts of what is real, or even acceptable to our minds and senses. The issue of lasting physical or psychological changes was addressed by Jacques Vallée in his 1990 book *Confrontations*.

An article entitled "How Nonsense Sharpens The Mind" by Benedict Carey from the *New York Times* reports on research into seemingly nonsensical events and how they are useful in deconstructing our endless search for structure and meaning, injecting helpful doses of depatterning. Participants in a study were asked to read an absurdist short story by Franz

Kafka and then given a test that analyzed their ability to find hidden patterns in strings of letters:

> The test is a standard measure of what researchers call implicit learning: knowledge gained without awareness. The students had no idea what patterns their brain was sensing or how well they were performing. But perform they did. They chose about 30 percent more of the letter strings, and were almost twice as accurate in their choices, than a comparison group of 20 students who had read a different short story, a coherent one.[1]

What this may indicate is that UFOs may exist as a mega-experiment in deconstructing our ideas of what is possible, our place in the universe, our ways of accepting what is real and even our methods of cataloging sensory input. The question remains as to who is conducting the experiment, and how much we are either subjects, equal partners, or almost wholly responsible for the experiments and the results.

Ostensibly, the UFO question is whether a non-human source is causing sightings, abductions, radar returns and flying saucer religions, but the intricacies of the problem impinge on so many other areas that we redefine them as well. Examples include reported physics of UFO movement, the question of cultural antecedents and perhaps how our society decides what is acceptable as serious study. That last one may be the most deconstructive effect of all. Changes in our mindset, and not any so-called "answers" may be the real reason behind the whole thing, or at least the most meaningful. There may indeed be "knowledge gained without awareness."

In the end, this may all be a metaphor for something so inscrutable as to be inexplicable in language or thoughts of which we are currently capable.

[1] http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/06/health/06mind.html

"Mary's Room" And UFO Witness Testimony
5/29/2009

Nearly 30 years ago, philosopher Frank Jackson authored a little-known essay with the tongue-twisting title "Epiphenomenal Qualia." Jackson

proposed a hypothetical scientist named Mary who was locked in a windowless room and could only gather information about the outside world through a sophisticated set of scientific instruments. Ever-helpful Wikipedia breaks it down:

> Mary's Room is a proposed thought experiment that attempts to establish that there are non-physical properties and attainable knowledge that can be discovered through conscious experience. It attempts to refute the theory that all knowledge is physical knowledge.

The particulars of the thought experiment are described as follows:

> Mary is a brilliant scientist who is, for whatever reason, forced to investigate the world from a black and white room via a black and white television monitor. She specializes in the neurophysiology of vision and acquires, let us suppose, all the physical information there is to obtain about what goes on when we see ripe tomatoes, or the sky, and use terms like 'red', 'blue', and so on. She discovers, for example, just which wavelength combinations from the sky stimulate the retina, and exactly how this produces via the central nervous system the contraction of the vocal cords and expulsion of air from the lungs that results in the uttering of the sentence 'The sky is blue'. [...] What will happen when Mary is released from her black and white room or is given a color television monitor? Will she learn anything or not?[2]

Jackson is proposing that our senses and how the information is processed by our brains convey an entirely separate experience of the physical world than any amount of quantitative data can hope to convey. He theorizes that a complete experience of the physical world is not possible simply by measuring it in all aspects to the most infinitesimal level.

When Mary is released into the outside world, will she know all there is to know about the physical world as experienced by her senses simply by collecting all the information she can beforehand? Our impressions of our surroundings are not completely described by the quantitative data that can be gathered by instruments that are basically refined versions of our senses.

The act of smelling a flower or hearing the crash of the surf, for example, cannot be perfectly described in language or numbers. The best that pure information can hope to achieve is an approximation.

For a consciousness that has never subjectively experienced a particular sensation, there is little if anything that can be done to communicate the total set of sensory input and its subsequent concatenation by the brain at levels below our normal awareness which results in the mental experience of the world outside of our skins. The brain starts to create its own narrative and the process of moving away from the original experience begins.

Given all that is involved just to communicate ordinary, everyday life to one another, when we add the novelty of a paranormal experience to the mix, we are now working from a set of sensations, ideas, and personal interpretations that are nearly impossible to convey to those who have not had a sighting. It is no wonder that those who report UFOs and other strange things are not only at a loss to convey their feelings (much less their sensory memories) to others, but are also up against the fear of being called liars or mentally unbalanced since most of those to whom they attempt to communicate have no frame of reference.

This lack of empathy is a vicious circle. No one completely understands the UFO witness, and since they often don't want to listen, no new information is added to the experiential database, leaving new witnesses to start almost from square one every time. The collection of data collected over 60 years or more contains less than half of the experience of seeing a UFO. Emotions, family and personal history, medical history, upbringing, other things that happened to the witness before and after the sighting and a thousand other variables are ignored.

Admittedly, there are only so many data points that can be collected, but sinking our one anchor in the dry data of everyday physical measurements is a disservice to progress toward any answer as well as the witnesses. As far as witness testimony is concerned, we are all imprisoned in Mary's Room, and there we will stay until some of us start to plot an escape using a few of the crude tools we have at hand.

[2] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge_argument

Aliens And Drugs

1/23/2007

This one's going to make a lot of people uncomfortable, and perhaps anger a few more. That's a good thing.

You can meet aliens on demand.

So said Terence McKenna, the psychedelic sage, and another name you might not know about, Dr. Rick Strassman. McKenna (who died of a brain tumor in April of 2000) took over the mantle of psychedelic cheerleader and tripmeister from Timothy Leary, according to Leary himself and many others. Strassman's 2001 book *DMT: The Spirit Molecule* described repeated encounters with alien-like beings under the influence of the alkaloid Di-Methyl Tryptamine (DMT).

Old Guard ufologists express horror at the mention of mind-altering drugs. This is the sort of thing that they have been trying to get away from for years. One of the first things in UFO accounts is always the old standby "The witness was not drinking that night," even though there are precious few instances where people have hallucinated *anything* on alcohol. If you're drunk enough to imagine an alien ship landing in front of your car, it might be surprising that you could find your way to the car in the first place, or remember anything about the experience. The study of Ufology deals almost exclusively with witness testimony. Opening the "doors of perception" shuts the credibility door. Can't have that.

I do not discount the psychedelic experience. For one thing, everything is remembered consciously after the drug wears off. Writers like Aldous Huxley and scientists such as Andrija Puharich have extolled psychedelics as a key to altered states of consciousness that put us in touch with the inner and outer world, and makes the user more aware of the blurred line between the two. The line between "reality" and imagination is certainly an integral part of the UFO experience. The imaginal realm may be where UFO entities reside most of the time. Do not equate "imaginal" with "unreal." A discussion of this dichotomy would take more room than we have here.

McKenna wrote and talked about his experiences under the influence of psychedelics, including a memorable trip to the Amazon, when at sunrise, he observed what he described as a "perfect Adamski-type saucer" sailing over a river. Notably, this was NOT under the influence of any drugs. He did not know what to make of this at the time. Perhaps there was something

there in the sky, but his mind chose to frame it in an admittedly ridiculous context.

He is perhaps best known for his encounters with something he called "self-transforming machine elves," seen when under the influence DMT. He described these "entities" as playful, curious, and yet immensely wise, eager to teach as much as to learn. This echoes some of Whitley Strieber's descriptions of his "visitors." Thousands of others have described similar encounters. I sometimes choose to see them as not "mere hallucinations," but a manifestation of the continuum of consciousness of which we are a part, but are perhaps only dimly aware of our place within it. Most of us think we are the only members.

McKenna had much to say on the nature of reality, consciousness, and our current views on these intimately related subjects, which is far too extensive to go into here. That's what the internet is for.

Strassman may be an even bigger threat to the Ufological status quo, because he is a credentialed scientist who makes cautious statements about extra-human entities encountered during DMT "trips." What is more horrifying is that he cannot be shelved as a drugged-out kook, since the experiences he describes were related to him by test subjects in one of the only (if not the only) legal and scientific study of the effects of DMT on a group of selected test subjects and documented in his 2001 book *DMT: The Spirit Molecule*.

From 1990 to 1995, Strassman worked with sixty volunteers at the University of New Mexico. Assisted by hospital nurses, he administered DMT intravenously (injected into muscle tissue) to the subjects, and sat by to observe and record the reactions. There was also extensive debriefing after the sessions to note anything that was not described vocally during the drug trips. About half of the volunteers met up with something that they described as "alien" during their experiences. At first, Strassman had trouble even admitting that this was going on. He wrote:

> When reviewing my bedside notes, I continually feel surprise in seeing how many of our volunteers "made contact" with "them," or other beings…Research subjects used expressions like "entities," "beings," "aliens," "guides," and "helpers" to describe them. The "life forms" looked like clowns, reptiles, mantises, bees, spiders, cacti, and stick figures. It is still startling to see my written

> records of comments like "There were these beings," "I was being led," "They were on me fast." It's as if my mind refuses to accept what's there in black and white**.**

Another of the participants said, "They do seem interested in you, in people, especially in their feelings…it was interested in my fear, and in me."

If you are at all familiar with the abduction literature, these phrases and descriptions are *exactly* what is reported by people who claim to have been taken out of their beds or cars or wherever and led onto machines that looked like spaceships. Some of the DMT test subjects even talked about quasi-medical exams.

The fundamentalist skeptic stirs, rises, and grumbles, "See? It IS all in the mind." Those with any semblance of an inquiring and reasonably independent disposition cannot deny the parallels. I cannot claim any abduction experiences, either straight or on drugs, but the data intersections are intriguing, and point to a need for a revised view of just what this alien encounter thing is all about.

So call up the aliens if you want. All you need is a good connection.

Objectivity As An Enemy Of UFO Study
10/10/2007

In a short on-camera interview with Paul Kimball, I suggested that researchers should start to use the subjective comments (feelings, guesses, ideas etc.) of UFO witnesses to add to the database of sightings. One of the comments on the posted video said that my thoughts were

> a symptom of the frustrated undercurrent thinking men have with UFOlogy except that in his case I can't help but to think he's avoiding key data. The lack of traction he finds with available material is taking him down speculative, invented pathways of viral, memetic lala land. That's potentially the worst way to find core truth and corrosive to the integrity of legitimate UFO study.[3]

I replied that I didn't think we should abandon other methods of investigation, just that we should start to consider the subjective effects that

UFO encounters have on the percipient.

The commenter was intelligent in his remarks, but they belied a system of belief that leaves little room for anything other than "objective" scientific study. As far as I can tell, he believes that the "core truth" about UFOs will be found by massaging the reams of data that we already have on hand. If no one has been able to deduce the slightest bit of irrefutable information about the origin and purpose of the UFO enigma by now, how many more years and permutations of data is going to yield an answer? People far smarter than I are still scratching their heads over this.

We are both objective and subjective beings. I am suggesting a way to mine that subjective part of our minds for possible insights to what our non-human visitors may be trying to say to us, if anything. For example, if the witness says "It made me re-evaluate our place in the universe," let's take that down and remember it. If someone's life goes through a massive change (moving away from their home, changing jobs, etc.) as a result of their sighting, that's a pretty good indicator that there is much more going on in the interaction than just the sight of a light flitting through the sky or humanoids waving weird metallic objects around. We might be able to deduce trends in the qualitative effects of sightings and encounters over many years. Does it follow changes in society? How do the ways that witnesses feel about their experience tally with other sociological trends? Are the reactions mostly individual, having more to do with the psychological set of the percipient?

Maybe there's nothing to this and I'm whistling in the dark, but I don't think that this sort of study has been attempted before. As for the commenter on my interview, I am sure he's quite sincere in his concern that I am headed down the primrose path to "lala land," but this concern with "legitimate UFO study" belies a fear that UFOs as a subject for serious thinkers will never gain any respectability unless we toe the line that has been drawn for us. I say, the hell with it – it hasn't gotten us any closer to an answer, so let's try something different.

We don't need to stop looking over the shoulders of those who continue to look at dry, scientific data, but perhaps a look at the emotional component of the UFO experience can bring something new to the table. Who knows? One offhand comment from a witness might open up a whole new area of fruitful study. All we need to do is ask.

[3] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2sFApLazTE

The UFO "Repeaters" Phenomenon
6/28/2007

Venerated UFO researcher J. Allen Hynek used to say that if a UFO case involved a witness who had experienced multiple sightings, this disparaged their credibility. What Hynek (and most other UFO researchers) didn't want was ammunition for fundamentalist skeptics who associated "repeaters" with wide-eyed publicity-seeking wackos. Unfortunately, this overlooks some important facts and famous, well-supported cases.

Perhaps the most discussed (at least in the hardcore UFO field) is the Trent family/ McMinnville case of 1950. When it was discovered that the witnesses had seen UFOs on at least two other occasions, some Ufologists became worried and the fundamentalist skeptics howled. Mrs. Trent said that she felt that they were fortunate to have a camera handy when a saucer appeared near their home. It also came to light that others in the area had also seen strange things flying about over McMinnville for months, but had not discussed this with outsiders. It was a classic "flap" situation.

Another famous case with "repeater" status was the Pascagoula event of October, 1973. One of the witnesses/ abductees, Charles Hickson described two other close encounter events that happened to him in the years following his harrowing night of apparent abduction on a UFO. One of these subsequent sightings was witnessed along with other members of his family on a lonely stretch of road in rural Mississippi. He came to believe that the beings he encountered in his first experience were "watching him."

Many would be surprised to learn that Maurice Masse, who encountered small beings in a lavender field in Valensole, France in June of 1965 saw UFOs on multiple occasions. The sightings affected him such that some might be moved to categorize Monsieur Masse as a contactee. Investigators Aime Michel and Charles Bowen interviewed Masse in 1967. Tellingly, he said, "I know when they are about. On several occasions, something in me has told me 'they aren't far off,' and then I actually have either seen something in the sky, or I have learned afterward from the newspapers that something had happened…that has happened to me several times." Bowen went on to comment "What seems essential to him [Masse]

is the mental relationship existing between these beings and men. But in him this relationship is felt, rather like a religious concept."

Bowen also remarked that Masse's original encounter was in an open area that allowed the UFO occupants to see anyone who might approach and take evasive action very quickly, but that Masse was able to approach the beings to within a few meters before he was apparently paralyzed by some sort of device that one of the beings pointed at him. Bowen hypothesized that the event was premeditated by the ufonauts, as some sort of "theater" for the benefit of Masse. This certainly adds a surprising twist to the story, and to our view of the phenomenon. It may also be reading too much into the phenomenon and any agents responsible.

Perhaps what occasionally happens is that people are "marked" or affected in some way that attracts the phenomenon, or makes them more sensitive to it than others. In the case of contactees, the mere act of talking about UFO occupants and the subject in general, in a spiritual way, may have a similar effect. As I have mentioned before, some contactees may have had an initial sighting, which in their minds made it OK to make things up later. Perhaps some of them didn't make up as much as we have thought. Some people by design, or accident, seem to turn into "strange attractors."

Well-known abductee Travis Walton has to my knowledge not claimed any more weird episodes other than his 1975 encounter.

Bigfoot and UFOs and the Electromagnetic Spectrum
2/25/2010

That headline is enough to frighten even the most seasoned UFO researcher or cryptozoologist, but a brave post at the Blogsquatcher site [now defunct] looks at electromagnetic effects associated with Bigfoot sightings.[4]

Turns out that there are documented instances of dying car engines associated with Bigfoot sightings. Some of us may have heard of the tendency for some UFOs to stop cars (and sometimes restart them) as well. Doesn't it seem a bit odd that two things that are considered so dissimilar could have the same effects associated with them?

The introduction of this sort of speculation may cause many to jump to the conclusion that I am saying that Bigfoot and UFOs are the same thing. Not so. They may impinge on some of the same areas and have the same effects associated with them, which is a good indication that at least some aspects of these paranormal subjects may have similar origins, at least as we perceive them. The physical effects may be a epiphenomenon of the forces at work when something strange is experienced, or perhaps it is the other way around. Or both.

The Blogsquatcher asks why there are still no pictures of Bigfoot from numerous automatic cameras set up to capture an image when they detect movement. Perhaps the simple answer is that the creature actually requires a witness to "call it into existence." This is also something that has been argued for some UFO cases. Of course, this brings to mind the so-called "tulpa" theory of manifested thoughtforms. You may know that Nick Redfern and I are fans of this sort of speculation, not as an explanation for the whole UFO subject, but as an adjunct.

As for Bigfoot and UFOs in the same vicinity, there are a few examples in existence, such as the shenanigans around Dulce, New Mexico (as if that area didn't have enough strangeness already) and a strange Bigfoot/UFO case from 1973 in Pennsylvania involving multiple witnesses with physical and apparently enduring psychological effects, investigated by famed researcher Stan Gordon.

[4] https://web.archive.org/web/20100214093636/http://blogsquatcher.blogspot.com/2010/02/i-sing-sasquatch-electric.html

Since my original essay on UFO interactions viewed as an art project, I have started to wonder how much of a witness' experience is coming from the supposed "aliens," (whatever that term means) and what the human mind does with the experience. I have also wondered how much more we might contribute to the dance. There are many reasons to consider that we may be adding more than we may want to admit, and some of the answers to the UFO enigma may lie in the realms of depth psychology. This essay was written specifically for this collection.

UFOs As A Cosmic Art Project Part 2: The Co-Creation Hypothesis

A strange but perhaps fruitful way to look at the UFO contact experience may not be to continually gather raw data on the physical appearance of anomalous objects and apparent humanoid entities, but to also look at closer encounters as we would consider the viewing of a creative work. By “closer” I mean the close encounter definition of “within 500 feet or less” of the witness.

In 2007, I proposed a thought experiment that considered anomalistic encounters with apparent unknowns as a radical art project or movement which forces the viewer or witness to experience a form of “art” that engages not only their senses, but more importantly, their inner life. Any good artist can do this through painting, the written word, film, online media etc.

What if this artist could not only engender a reaction to their work, but was so talented that the viewer’s life was changed deeply and permanently? What if this change was so insidious that even the artist didn’t even consciously intend it and the effects varied with the individual, based on the witness’ culture, psychology, upbringing, genetics, etc? This hypothetical artist would become famous not for what was represented in their work, but what was pulled out of each person’s psyche as a result of the experience.

To a somewhat limited extent, this occasionally happens with artworks of great merit. The film *2001, A Space Odyssey* is still being discussed almost 50 years after its initial release. This is in part because many of the images, especially in the last segments of the film, are apparently non-narrative, nonsensical, or even abstract. In a 1968 interview, director Stanley Kubrick said: “You're free to speculate as you wish about the philosophical and allegorical meaning of the film—and such speculation is one indication that it has succeeded in gripping the audience at a deep level—but I don't want to spell out a verbal road map for *2001* that every viewer will feel obligated to pursue or else fear he's missed the point.“[5] The discovery of personal meaning from a work of art has a far more lasting and profound effect than having it dictated, because it seems that the artist is speaking directly to our innermost selves.

We fill in the “missing” parts of the narrative in order to make sense of the story. In this process, personal meaning is derived. How much is this more evident than in a UFO encounter, where the experience is often so overwhelming that our minds have only the context of older reports,

popular culture and many other precursors waiting to be grafted on to the narrative as it is occurring, and perhaps more importantly, afterwards when we retell the story to ourselves and others. We can't help but make the event intensely personal.

Some may comment that a close encounter with a strange object or apparent occupant is just as we see it and no interpretation is needed. If these sorts of extraordinary experiences were testable on demand and involved something we all agree upon as "real" occurrences, this argument would hold more validity. A quick look at the literature reveals that UFO and entity encounters are most assuredly not the same for everyone, and varies sharply according to culture, and the point in history when it occurs, as well as a host of lesser factors. What we consider the "standard" visits from big-headed, grey skinned thingies only started to be widely reported in the late 1970s. Most researchers tend to ignore anything that doesn't fit the standard scenario, so there is some unconscious (as well as deliberate) censoring of the database going on.

In his 1997 book *Mind Trek*, former Army remote viewer Joe McMoneagle proposed a model for how the mind interprets input from the senses. It is worth quoting at length in our context:

> We reside and operate in a constantly fluctuating past of our own creation…By the time our processing is of any use to us, we are already dealing with past events. Our reality is one we in fact invent or make up as we go.
>
> Processing sequence as a Function of Time
>
> ZERO TIME 0: We recognize incoming information about our current reality.
>
> PLUS .00000 We begin to make sense of the input from our five senses.
>
> PLUS.00001: We fish out additional information from our hard-wired brain memory modules.
>
> PLUS.0001: We reason a little about the information and decide we lack certain essentials to make any decisions.
>
> PLUS .001: We insert additional overlay, inaccurate assumptions a prejudice in order to make it more palatable.

PLUS .01: We reach a conclusion regarding our surrounding physical reality.

PLUS .1: Assured of the accuracy of our reality understanding, we make corrections to our hard-wired memory, file the conclusions for quick reference in the next check to make sure nothing changes too drastically, and begin the process all over again.

Overlap these processing sequences and perform them at fifty times per second and you can see that not only is the accuracy somewhat questionable, but no matter how fast it operates, it will always be just a tad behind reality as it can be observed. We will always be subject to our own observations as well as our own belief concepts.[6]

Think of what is happening to a UFO witness. These complicated, subconscious processes are going on while the mind is furiously trying to stuff everything into the proper mental filing boxes for cognition and recall later. It is a wonder that we get *any* memories of extraordinary experiences.

"Burnt State," my friend who frequents a few online forums, has suggested that the narrative (story) that develops from a close encounter is not an accurate record of the original event, but it is all we are left with when talking to a witness. In the act of creating a memory, he says, the original experience is already at an irreversible remove from the first impressions. Also each time the incident is recalled or told, the story changes a little bit to make the witness and others feel more involved, at peace, frightened, etc. This is co-creation after the fact.

The late Bruce Duensing had a many original points to make about human interaction with UFOs that inform the co-creation idea:

It suggests that our local information is being borrowed and then fed back to us in a consistent pattern of randomization.

They have no direct purpose as we ourselves define purpose in the pragmatic sense of the word. If there is purpose, it is oblique in nature, or is mimicking purpose as much as it does with its various appearances.

The variability of forms, images and shapes suggests a selection process and consistency of what is projected has been avoided for the same reason.[7]

Apart from suggesting that our ideas of time and causality are playing a role in our confusion over UFOs (which is almost certainly the case) Duensing is saying that there is really no apparent reason for the things to be coming around, at least not in any way that makes rational sense, and that there may be an intention of presenting images and feelings that are specifically designed to be inscrutable to us. In this way, the option to choose our own meaning and intent may be forced on us for some unknown purpose. If there is an intelligence there, is it communicating with us by holding up a mirror whenever we try to look too closely? Do we cause this ourselves by our methods of cognition?

I have played with the idea that the elements of the UFO enigma may be as ubiquitous and natural as something like the wind and waves. They simply exist and do what they do no matter what we think of them. Our meaning comes for example as navigators on the ocean or as scientists who discuss how the seas regulate weather, CO2 absorption, etc. In the same way, we may be forcing most of our ideas and feelings and attention onto something that only becomes meaningful when we choose to assign meaning. And that meaning is dictated in large part by our needs and expectations.

If that is the case, we may be the major architects of the UFO experience, contributing perhaps almost 100% of the information that we think is objective. If this is true, then old-time researcher and UFO promoter Gray Barker may have been close to the truth when he said to "look for the saucers deep within yourself."

[5] Norden, Eric. Interview: Stanley Kubrick. *Playboy* (September 1968).

[6] McMoneagle, Joseph. *Mind Trek: Exploring Consciousness, Time, and Space Through Remote Viewing* 1993/1997 Hampton Roads Publishing. Pgs. 187-188.

[7] Duensing, Bruce. "Behaviorism Beyond Physicality" from *A Transit Of Contingencies* Saturday, May 16, 2015. http://tarnsitsandstations.blogspot.com/2015/05/behaviorism-beyond-physicality.htm

8 - Connections, Conspiracies, and Cut-Ups: Other Stuff

None of the following could be shoehorned comfortably into of the other chapters. Some might be called "conspiracy" oriented, while others are just strange or funny, such as the piece on using my own and others' writing as material for William Burroughs' "cut-up" exercise. Two of the articles force baseball into the conversation. Also included is a piece about how I almost killed a friend of mine by torturing him with Warner Brothers cartoons while he was high. The section concludes with an award-winning article about ethnic weapons from 1998.

The Name Game

7/23/2009

It has been noted that names of witnesses to UFOs and other strange phenomena sometimes repeat themselves.

Coral and Jim Lorenzen related this original account in their 1967 book *Flying Saucer Occupants* (which is actually one of my favorite UFO books.)

> A strange story about stalled cars and little men was told to authorities and the press on the morning of November 6, 1957, when Richard Kehoe, an employee of the General Telephone Company of Santa Monica, related his early-morning experience. This is another tale, which has fallen into ill repute because of the reluctance of researchers to accept human-like occupants as real, and the lack of corroborating witnesses.
>
> Kehoe claimed that while driving along Vista del Mar at Playa del Rey in California (a beach area) at 5:40 a.m. his engine stopped as did the engines of the two other cars. When the drivers got out to see what was wrong they saw an egg-shaped spaceship wrapped 'in a blue haze' on the beach. Kehoe claimed two "little men" (about 5 feet 5 inches, which isn't really small) got out of the object and asked questions of him and the two other drivers, such as: 'Where we were going? Who we were? What time it was? etc.' He said their skin appeared to be yellowish-green in the early morning light, but that otherwise they looked normal. He said they were wearing black leather pants, white belts, and light-colored jerseys.
>
> The two other drivers were identified as Ronald Burke of Redondo Beach and Joe Thomas of Torrance, and Kehoe claimed Thomas called the police. He said they sounded as though they were talking English but he couldn't understand them, and said simply that he had to go to work. The men got back into their ship and disappeared into the sky, whereupon his car started up immediately. The ship was oval, tan or cream in color, with two metal rings around it upon which the object apparently rested, according to Kehoe.

Of course “Keyhoe” is a name famous in UFO circles. Major Donald Keyhoe was an early ufological force who in 1950 wrote *The Flying Saucers Are Real*, probably the first important book about the subject, which was based on his wildly popular article of the same name in *True* magazine from December of 1949. He was also the co-founder (in 1956) of the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP.)

Another witness to strange things in the sky on November 6th of 1957 was Mrs. Charles Weitzel, who looked out of her kitchen window in Corona Del Mar (some 40 miles down the coast from the Kehoe encounter) to see something hovering over the ocean that looked like “an orange jack-o-lantern.”

Just over a year later on the night of November 8th of 1958, another witness, Charles Wetzel (essentially the same name) encountered a strange creature with “scaly skin, like leaves” and a “round, scarecrowish head like something out of Halloween” skulking in the seasonally dry Santa Ana River in Riverside, California. It climbed on the windshield of his car as he drove through the riverbed, clawing at the glass, and then slipped down the hood and under the car, where Wetzel ran it over.

There is *another* Charles Wetzel, who sighted a six-foot kangaroo in the wilds of Nebraska on July 28th of the same year. Both Wetzels (who were not related) had sons named Charles. Did Mr. and Mrs. Charles Weitzel of Corona Del Mar also have a son named Charles? An unnamed witness encountered the same goblin the next night in Riverside. Was this person named Keyhoe or Kehoe?

Adding to this Gordian knot is a letter received at the Aerial Phenomena Research Organization’s (APRO) headquarters in July of 1980. It described a dramatic UFO sighting involving eleven Air Force personnel on a training exercise. Bill Moore, who was on the governing board of APRO at the time, called the witness and found out that he hadn’t written it and that most of the details in the letter had been made up by someone else. It turned out to be a baiting exercise designed to hook in gullible UFO researchers and later resulted in Moore’s controversial involvement with elements of Air Force Intelligence.

The witness’ name was Craig Weitzel.

Loren Coleman, writing in his 1983 book *Mysterious America* said:

> "Wetzel" is a German name, a corrupted form of "little Varin," from "warin," meaning "protector." Should we therefore assume some elemental insight from a name that literally means "little protector or guardian?"

Are the Wetzels/ Weitzels protecting us from strange creatures from time, space and other dimensions? The Keyhoes/ Kehoes appear to be attractors for the UFO phenomenon. Idle speculation perhaps, but the "name game" may be evidence of a larger pattern that is inscrutable to us as yet.

More Name Games
12/09/2006

Fortean researchers, most notably Loren Coleman, have written about the frequency of certain surnames in association with strange phenomena.

While reading an account of the travels of the remains of Snippy the Horse, the name game is irresistible. Snippy, if you don't know, was the first victim of livestock mutilation ascribed to UFO aliens, way back in 1967.

In the early 1970s, Snippy's bones were on display in the chamber of commerce at Alamosa, Colorado (the community where she was found.) When the city fathers wanted to throw the remains out, a man named Herman Doty was interested in the bones as the basis of a museum that never happened. As most of you know, RICHARD Doty was the AFOSI agent who ran a UFO disinfo operation against Paul Bennewitz in the early 1980s, as described in my book ***Project Beta***. I wonder if there is any family relationship?

In the 1980s, Snippy passed into the hands of one Carl Heflin, described as a "local collector." Perhaps you know that a fine fellow named REX Heflin snapped a series of pictures of a strange, disc-shaped craft in Santa Ana, California on August 3rd, 1965. Both Heflins have passed away in the last couple of years.

Perhaps if my surname was Doty or Heflin, I might have had more luck sighting UFOs, or at least led an even more interesting life up to now.

Conspiracy Corner
2/27/2009

Every so often I come across something that is so awe-inspiring that I cannot let the surly bonds of the UFO subject constrain the quest to bring our readers new and perhaps valuable knowledge.

Recently, I was talking with my good friend (as well as my first publisher) David Hatcher Childress, owner of Adventures Unlimited Press. Dave's been into the weirdness since before many of us were even aware of it, and reminded me of a singular conspiracy theorist from the late 1970s who I'd heard of, but had somehow forgotten.

From 1975 to 1982 this man sent out "audio newsletters" to selected subscribers, detailing his revelations about various parapolitical machinations of the US and other world governments. He laid many of the planet's ills squarely on the doorstep of the Rockefeller family, but didn't leave out details of the Kennedy assassination (Lyndon Johnson was responsible), weather warfare, and his theory that Jimmy Carter had died and been replaced by a "Carter robotoid" sometime during his term.

While there may have been more than a little truth in what he reported over his seven year audiotape campaign, his information may have been hard for some people to take given his name, which he apparently refused to change for publicity purposes.

The man's legal name was *Dr. Peter Beter*.

To make things worse, his surname was pronounced "beater." Beavis and Butthead, take note. Now, his *middle* name would have been fine. Announcing himself as "Dr. P. David Beter" may have lent an air of respectability to his work, but no, each taped lecture began with a jaunty, "Hello everybody, this is Dr. Beter."

One amazing entry for September 30 of 1977 found Dr. Beter telling us about the "Battle of the Harvest Moon," a US/ Soviet particle beam weapon fight between the "secret Rockefeller moon base" and a Soviet crew orbiting the Earth:

> By the 26th of September, American personnel at the secret Rockefeller moon base nestled in Copernicus Crater were almost ready. Their Particle Beam was almost operational–but they were too late. By late that day, the Soviet Union began bombarding the

> moon base with a Neutron Particle Beam. Through the night, and all day on September 27 the moon base was bombarded without mercy with neutron radiation just like that produced by a neutron bomb; and by that evening as Americans looked up at the peaceful full moon overhead known as the Harvest Moon, the last few Americans on the moon were dying of neutron radiation. America had lost the Battle of the Harvest Moon.
>
> My friends, in 1945 America became the first nation on earth to possess an awesome new super-weapon, the Atomic Bomb; but now, it is the Soviet Union that has won the race for a new super-weapon–the Particle Beam, that could be as decisive today as the Atomic Bomb was in 1945. The Rockefellers have disarmed America while betting everything on the moon base, thinking they would win the race; but they made a terrible miscalculation–and now we will all suffer the consequences.

Most current parapolitical researchers will cite the work of people like Mae Brussell, Sherman Skolnick, Jim Marrs, David Lifton and others as examples of the giants on whose shoulders they stand, but little is remembered of Dr. Peter David Beter. Perhaps my friends Kenn Thomas and Robert Sterling can explain why Beter is seemingly ignored today. There are likely many nuggets of interest entrenched in his seemingly insane audiotapes.

Fortunately for us, the entire series of Peter Beter talks are archived on the web as text and mp3s (www.peterdavidbeter.com.)

Listen at your peril, after you stop laughing at the name.

UFO Cut-Ups
9/12/2008

I've been waiting for something like this. Mac Tonnies has informed me about an online "cutup generator."[2] For those unfamiliar with this concept, it involves taking words and phrases from various texts and rearranging them in random order to create new concepts and ideas. The technique was discovered and developed by Bryon Gysin and William S. Burroughs in the 1950s. Burroughs in particular has used it in his fiction, to amazing effect.

With a strange and enigmatic subject such as UFOs, the technique may reveal things which are swimming around our collective unconscious and need some sort of X-factor to tease out new ideas. It may also reveal what we are really thinking, or maybe provide a punchline to a joke we didn't even realize we were telling.

Mac used some of his UFO writing and came up with this:

But while disclosure of alien visitation is eagerly awaited — even expected — encourage belief that Grays are flesh-and-blood ET anthropologists. Their antics, while horrifying, may be as bogus as But I doubt that that "something" is genetic material in the usual sense; it seems more likely spacecraft and diminutive occupants who seem to have stepped out of there's the equally appealing possibility that manifesting in terms comprehensible to witnesses reflects the vocabulary with which to understand it. Or maybe it won't, content to let us project our own unspoken semi-straight faces.

Of course, I tried it with some of my writing and came up with:

Subscribe to my Yahoo would like to see parapsychology involved in distances covered by high speed aircraft

Around the internet progress has been made that they are on a cattle kick the cover of Communion, a flying saucer some readers (including myself, and death.)

Many readers may as well, and repeated attempts to make one with Humanoid figures on or even think about? It is easier to think about equipment.

If in answer to similar be faked so easily. Why apparently hovered over until a few years ago may not.

The phenomenon appears to have perfectly human. In fact, I thought a copy of old the US Military has released little? Images floating around the internet made up. Later in the same month, worldwide political perfectly isolated location control and political unrest. In consecutive evenings, June 26-27, 1959. About twenty-five Earth.

I'd be interested to see others try this out. It might be like our version of SETI@home, where the thousands of random signals received by radio telescopes all over the world are examined by individual home computers to search for intelligent signals. Perhaps we can discover some sort of message that non-humans or our collective thoughts may be trying to send to us.

[2] http://www.languageisavirus.com/cutupmachine.html#.VjZiOaSm2iY

Baseball At Area 51
9/17/2009

At last week's ASPE Conference, Norio Hayakawa told me that there is a baseball diamond at Area 51 (or S4, or whatever they're calling it these days.) Indeed there is.

What sort of games go on here? Do they have special rules? Anti-gravitic baseballs? Have captured aliens been taught to field grounders or shag flies? Am I joking?

What does the team call themselves? The "51s?" Oh yes, a minor league team in Las Vegas has taken that name (and much of my money) already. Their logo is an alien head with baseball stitches running along it's rounded cranium.

On this field of secrets, people whom we will never hear about, likely discuss technology we cannot imagine in between cheers, boos and cries of "Yer OUT!" A player who has just slid in under the tag for a bases-clearing triple might suddenly get an idea about how to vaporize you from space. Do the umpires need Department of Defense "Q" clearances? Do the people in the stands?

The weirdest thing is the incredible incongruity of such a normal group activity taking place at one of the most closely guarded areas on the planet. Someone in the hierarchy apparently decided some time ago that the people who work here would like to play baseball. Does the presence of the diamond help the military and scientists keep some sort of perspective on what they are working for?

Image from Google Maps

One strange benefit of this image is how we can use it. The building with the yellow roof in the lower portion of the picture is approximately 110 feet wide and 400 feet long. We know this because the distance between each set of bases on the playing field is (or should be) 90 feet. Using this as a yardstick, we can make educated guesses about the sizes of all the buildings on the base–that is unless someone has played with the image before giving it to Google Maps in order to throw off saboteurs and spies, as well as you and me. The whole area has most likely been overlaid with a false or distorted image deemed fit for public consumption.

Surprisingly, the public satellite image of Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque clearly shows entrances to underground tunnels or rooms ringing the formerly top-secret nuclear weapons storage complex, as well as the roads surrounding the hollowed-out mountain. Construction began in 1947, and the entrances and roads were constructed so as to be invisible to the casual observer.

In *Project Beta*, I related the story of abductee Myrna Hansen, who had supposedly seen some of the details of this complex, even though she had never been there. How she had this knowledge was of great concern to the U.S. Air Force.

Remote viewer Pat Price reportedly “saw” into an underground CIA facility during a test in the early 1970s, and provided names of sensitive programs he picked up from a locked filing cabinet in the complex. Perhaps Hansen did something like this unwittingly, but was this in the course of her abduction experience? I couldn’t get anyone to speak about that part of the story.

According to the protocols of "coordinate remote viewing," talented individuals can "see" a specific remote location if given the geographic coordinates (which are 37.241715N -115.818652W if you center the location at home plate.)

Perhaps a remote viewer should put the Area 51 baseball diamond into their blind target file.

In 1999, I purchased a t-shirt with a fanciful representation of a logo for an actual minor league baseball team that played in 1947 in Roswell, New Mexico. It got me to thinking about how I could write an article mixing baseball and UFOs. It turns out that the writers of the X-Files *had already taken on this unlikely combination, but I went ahead anyway. Legendary conspiracy researcher/writer Rob Sterling published this article at* konformist.com.

E.T. Play Ball
May, 1999

Psychologist Edward DeBono once proposed a novel method for producing new ideas and juxtapositions. List anything that interests you in two columns. Take something from each row and put them together with the neutral and meaningless word "po" in between. "Einstein po toast" for instance, might make you wonder about what the great scientist might have had for breakfast to get his brain going, or contemplate the ultimate outcome of the human race when faced with nuclear weapons aimed at every city.

If the writers of the Sunday, April 25, 1999 episode of *The X-Files* used this method, they may have come up with the unlikely phrase "Roswell po baseball." Some background may be in order before we go on.

If Joe Bauman had been at bat on the night of July 2, 1947, he might have knocked something out of the sky that later crashed northwest of Roswell, New Mexico. Bauman was first baseman for the minor league C-class Roswell Rockets in 1954 when he set a home run record that would put Babe Ruth, Roger Maris, and Mark McGwire to shame. During that

season, he smacked 72 homers over the right field fence, a feat that has yet to be equaled.

The team name probably derived from the fact rocket pioneer Robert Goddard located his test base there in the 1930s, or perhaps that the White Sands missile test range was located not far away. It is nearly certain that some defense workers and soldiers who experienced the events of July, 1947 in Roswell also attended Rockets games.

In a 1995 interview at the age of 73, Bauman held his big hands together around an imaginary cantaloupe and said that all the pitches that summer looked as big. “I was on fire” he said. In 1954 only about 800 fans saw each game, and the west Texas/southern New Mexico Longhorn League was quite small, as minor league organizations went. Bauman is still proud of that season, and admits he never really cared to step up to the majors anyway. With every home run, fans would stick one- and five-dollar bills in the backstop fence to congratulate him. He averaged about $40.00 per homer.

This sort of legendary hitting was also found in the Negro League baseball teams of the 1920s, '30s, and '40s. Josh Gibson was called “the black Babe Ruth“ and although no one ever bothered to keep statistics for Negro League players, anecdotes of his hitting power survive in legend and lore. Gibson is said to have hit a line drive so powerful that it split the flesh between the thumb and forefinger of an unlucky third baseman, right through his fielder's glove. He is said to have beat Bauman's record with a comfortable margin, although this can never be proven of course. Gibson died at age 35 in January, 1947 without ever getting a chance in the major leagues.

From these stories and others like them, *The X-Files* fashioned a whimsical tale of Roswell aliens and black baseball. Gibson had some of his best seasons playing for the Negro National League Homestead Grays team of Pennsylvania. *The X-Files* used this as a clever plot twist, naming the fictional Roswell team the “Greys” and their parent organization the “Cactus Negro League.” The star player is an alien so fascinated with the game that he shape-shifts into human form just to play. He sets a season home-run record as well. One character, a local policeman, mentions that “all the great players were aliens”–but that they didn't want to reveal their identities.

This could be a commentary on the plight of the negro players before 1946, who didn't have the luxury of shape-shifting to suit the times. One of the first black players to try and break the color barrier played for the Ohio Wesleyan University team under crusading manager Branch Rickey in 1903. Star first baseman Tommy Thomas often took to the field with the protests and taunts of the opposing team ringing in his ears. Many teams refused to play until Ohio sent him off the field. Games went ahead as scheduled only after Rickey loudly protested "You play Thomas or you don't play OWU!" Finally, after a pitiful scene in a hotel that nearly refused entrance to Thomas, Rickey vowed to do something to see that it wouldn't happen again. He kept this promise to himself at age 54 when he moved former negro leaguer Jackie Robinson up from Brooklyn's minor league Toronto Royals to play for the Dodgers in 1947.

Wait a second, isn't 1947 the same year that something fell out of the sky near Roswell, New Mexico?

"Aliens po Prejudice"

Laughter Spells Death
9/29/2011

There is the night I almost killed someone, and then had an experience that I am not sure was real, and I know that I didn't dream it.

On that fateful night, twenty or so people gathered at my house for a party/meeting of something we used to call the "Space Club," which was a loosely affiliated group of creative types who were interested in UFOs. I met my first wife at a Halloween party put on by the group where I arrived dressed up as Whitley Strieber.

On this night I was hosting the meeting. I printed up elaborate invitations, ordered a keg of the best beer I could afford, and invited Bill Moore to speak. This was a real coup. Another friend provided 8-bit psychedelic graphics to run on my TV while the party was going. Everything was perfect.

A musician from a band I liked at the time was one of the guests. He was heavily into a UFO phase at the time.

He refused to tell me what he was going to speak about, but Moore really delivered, regaling the room with some of his best cases and strange contacts with shadowy government operatives. He went on for almost two hours and the audience was enthralled.

Near the end of his talk, the musician, standing next to me in the kitchen, let loose with a crop of unscheduled remarks and began to heckle Moore, who wisely ignored him. Realizing that he was being ignored, he mumbled to himself, Popeye-like, through much of the rest of the lecture. There was a lengthy Q&A, which continued informally out on the porch after the talk. But apart from the strange remarks, everything turned out great.

As the party was breaking up, the musician apologized to me and said it wasn't really his fault, because he was drunk and also tripping on some high-quality LSD the whole time. I think he actually apologized to Moore as well.

Also by way of apology, he gave he a few hits of the acid and bade his goodbyes. I let him go because his wife was driving him home.

One of my friends was staying overnight after the party, so we immediately took the acid and were soon blazing like comets.

We spent the obligatory hour in the bathroom looking at our faces in the mirror and watching them turn into monsters and comic book heroes. Then, for some reason, we thought it would be fun to watch *Bugs Bunny* cartoons while high on acid. Big mistake.

We began to laugh so hard we thought we would stop breathing. At one point, I paused the tape on a shot of Bugs falling out of the sky and bouncing on the ground, and advanced it one frame at a time. For some reason, he found this exponentially funnier than just watching the thing at normal speed. He was in convulsions, beating his fists on the hardwood floor and begging me to stop. I suddenly realized that I had complete control over his fate just by turning my finger bit by tiny little bit on the jog wheel on my Betamax machine. He would plead with me to turn it off, and when the next frame came up, he would collapse in renewed paroxysms of laughter, telling me that I was going to kill him if I didn't cut it out.

Eventually, he realized that simply leaving the room would save his life, so he ran outside.

I followed him to make sure that he didn't fall down the stairs, but was quickly distracted by hundreds of colored lights shining down from the sky.

I couldn't see where they were coming from, so I climbed up on the roof of the house.

The night sky was peppered with multicolored flying things that looked like zipping, floating neon signs, but made of abstract patterns instead of letters. They weren't very big, but there were enough of them to light up the ground.

They gradually disappeared as the drug wore off, and I went back inside. My friend was not dead, but snoring peacefully, curled up in the bathroom next to the toilet. He looked happy, so I left him alone.

If I had tied him down and locked his eyes open, *Clockwork Orange*-like, and made him watch those cartoons in slow motion, would I have actually killed him? Maybe. Perhaps the CIA knows. The secret reports on the laughter torture have not come to light. Some enterprising researcher may locate them yet.

As for the UFOs, I've heard of many others who have seen them under the influence of psychedelics. Does that mean that they are hallucinations, or is our awareness expanded for a few hours so that we can see in a wider spectrum of light and/or consciousness? There are good arguments to be made for either point of view. Like many things, there are most likely elements of both at work, and our definition of waking consciousness is notoriously incomplete anyway.

Considering all the shenanigans, I'm glad that I didn't make my friend literally die laughing and that I didn't fall off the roof.

The Lucifer Project
7/27/2008

There is a lurking terror that presages dire consequences for humanity.

Apparently, evil scientists at NASA, in cooperation with the Illuminati and who knows what other shadowy groups, are planning to use the plutonium energy source in the Cassini space probe to ignite a fusion reaction when the spacecraft ends its useful life. What they hope to do is turn Saturn into another star (called "Lucifer.") The purpose is reportedly twofold: To create a new planetary system around Saturn for humans, and to cause an outgassing that will sterilize Earth, or at least wipe out a great

portion of the population so that the remaining people will unquestioningly accept a one-world government.

Shades of *Alternative 3* (a fictional story of off-planet refuge for the elite).

Of course, this is according to people like Richard Hoagland, who in 2003 proposed an almost believable (for the untutored) scenario for the Galileo spacecraft's reported controlled entry into Jupiter's atmosphere. Hoagland, building on the theories of a Dutch engineer named Jacco Van der Worp, proposed that the plutonium fuel used to power the probe was supposed to fall into the crushing lower atmosphere of Jupiter and ignite a fusion reaction which would turn the proto-star into an actual "second sun," a-la Arthur C. Clarke's *2010*. Obviously, this did not happen, although Hoagland and others point to a mysterious black spot that appeared in Jupiter's upper atmosphere about a month after Galileo made its death plunge.

Now, the same scenario is proposed for the Cassini craft, which was originally scheduled to take its dive sometime this month, but which has been pushed back to 2010. (Clarke was suspected of being a mason. Maybe he knew something we don't.)

Posts at various websites are gearing up for the event with fear and trembling, including the ever-popular Michael Salla, who urges public action to prevent this potential catastrophe. These pundits don't consider the possibility that a scientific analysis of the outcome leaves little doubt that the plutonium fuel has no chance of reaching the stage where it could cause a fusion reaction. Even if it did, the physics of planets that didn't become second stars in the first place makes it unlikely (or indeed impossible) that anything we could do would change this fact.

But scary ideas die hard, and like so many other things in this arena, the source of the rumors can be traced to a passage in William Cooper's *Behold A Pale Horse*. Cooper wrote (with absolutely nothing to back it up) that he had seen plans along these lines when he was in the Navy. Cooper is famous for remembering, word for word, reams of secret documents he supposedly read over a decade before he committed them to text in his own writings.

Perhaps I am too quick to judge this miasma of conspiracy, but the thought processes that arrived at the conclusion that the "end is nigh" yet again make me want to laugh more than scream.

Jacques Vallée On Mind Control
12/11/2009

My friend Miles Lewis pointed me to a recent essay by Jacques Vallée,[3] but after reading it, I'm divided on what to think.

In essence, Vallée makes the case that so-called mind-control drugs never worked effectively, and the evidence for this is that the United States has resorted to old-fashioned torture in interrogations of terrorist suspects.

In 1979, author John Marks concluded that the CIA had looked for years in vain for methods of mind control. In his book *The Search For The Manchurian Candidate*, he wrote that nothing he uncovered in his research on the CIA indicated a fool-proof method of either controlling people against their will or extracting information that would not be given voluntarily, at least with machines or drugs. This was not something the conspiracy crowd wanted to hear.

Mind-altering drugs would probably be used as a tool by trained (read: tight-lipped) interrogators, and would probably not be publicized as abuses of Abu-Ghraib, which were widespread and committed for the most part by regular Army personnel.

In a sense, this parallels the UFO subject. If the government is keeping any information they have on the reality of ETs or other aspects of extra-human intelligence, they could just as easily control public awareness of mind-control technology. The deepest secrets may not be fool-proof or complete, but it may be valuable enough to be worth the effort of covering up what little is known.

Some of us really want to think that a ruling elite really do know everything and have total control over our lives and thoughts. I tend to think that if that was the case, we'd be living in a version of Orwell's nightmare already. The fact that we can discuss this is evidence enough that at least some people are in general control of their thoughts and lives. The problem for a "ruling elite" is if too many of us start to think too much, and act on those thoughts. As the world becomes more destabilized, "crazy" ideas start to sound plausible to more people.

A full belly, a variety of entertainment, and general freedom of travel keeps most threats to the status quo in check. The best defense is awareness.

Dr. Vallée's essay can be taken as a sort of back-handed comfort, or we can take it under advisement.

[3] https://web.archive.org/web/20111030111853/
http://boingboing.net/2009/11/18/waterboardings-curio.html

Rob Sterling encouraged me to write this this article after hearing me rant about weapons that were designed to kill based on an enemies' ethnicity. He published it at konformist.com *in December of 1998. It went on to win an award from the media watchdog group Project Censored as one of the top 20 under-reported stories of that year.*

Ethnic Weapons For Ethnic Cleansing

Report: Israel Develops New Weapons

LONDON (AP) Israel is trying to identity genes carried only by Arabs that could be used to develop a biological weapon that would harm Arabs but not Jews, the *Sunday Times* reported.

The newspaper attributed its report to unidentified Israeli military and Western intelligence sources. It said Israeli scientists are working to create a genetically modified bacterium or virus that only attacks people who carry certain genes.

The paper said the weapon is seen as Israel's response to the threat of chemical and biological warfare from Iraq and could be spread by air or through the water supply.

The newspaper said the program is based at the biological institute in Nes Tziyona, which it described as the main research facility for Israel's chemical and biological weapons. According to the report, researchers have pinpointed "a characteristic in the genetic profile of certain Arab communities, particularly the Iraqi people."

The idea of such research has provoked controversy in Israel because of parallels with the genetic experiments at Auschwitz by Nazi scientist Dr. Josef Mengele during World War II, the paper said.

> "Morally, based on our history, and our tradition and our experience, such a weapon is monstrous and should be denied," Israeli parliament member Dedi Zucker is quoted as saying.
>
> Officials at Porton Down, Britain's biological defense facility, said such weapons were theoretically possible, the newspaper said.[4]

If we are to believe this *Sunday Times* report, it would appear that the Israelis have announced or intentionally leaked a report that its military was considering the development of so-called "ethnic weapons" The info is credited to "unidentified Israeli military and Western intelligence sources" which generally brings up the red flags with regard to authenticity, and more likely, the motive for such leaks. The article ends with a comment from an unnamed source at Britain's "biological defense facility" that pathogens which can kill on the basis of ethnicity are "theoretically possible."

This PR seemingly ignores the fact that this "theoretical possibility" was recognized over 25 years ago, if not before. It was originally brought to the attention of potential customers with the publication of an article in the *Military Review* of November 1970. This journal for command-level military personnel was published by the US Army Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The feature, entitled "Ethnic Weapons," authored by Carl A. Larson, outlines the history, desirability, and possibilities of engineered biological pathogens which would affect only those races which historically have no natural defense against certain "enzyme inhibitors." Larson is listed as head of the "Department of Human Genetics at the Institute of Genetics, Lund, Sweden" as well as a licensed physician. The Hippocratic oath was apparently not administered in Sweden when Larson received his accreditation.

Larson explains that many of the chemical activities and functions within the human body are caused by the interactions of enzymes. One of the more significant activities enabled by enzyme chemical reactions are the contraction and relaxation of muscle tissue. If the activities of these enzymes are blocked, the victim will be paralyzed, even to the point of death by asphyxiation. Not coincidentally, the enzyme-blocking action of compounds called organophosphates were discovered in Germany in the 1930s when experimental insecticides killed the people unlucky enough to

have used them. This discovery led to the mass production of a substance named “Trilon,” later used to impressive effect in the extermination of groups of people the Nazis considered little more than insects. This substance and others of similar makeup became known as “nerve gas.” A concentration of 40 milligrams per cubic meter can kill in about 10 minutes. Stronger agents were later developed which can do the job with a single drop on the skin.

The author points out that genetic variation between races is mirrored in concurrent differences in tolerance for various substances. As an example, it has been noted that large segments of Southeast Asian populations historically display a lactose intolerance, due to the near absence of the enzyme lactase in the digestive system. A chemical or biological weapon (CBW) which takes advantage of this genetic variance could conceivably kill or incapacitate entire populations, leaving invading armies relatively unscathed, as long as they are ethnically homogenous, or the at-risk members had at least been prepared to tolerate the attack. In effect, the poison or viruses would not be recognized by their bodies.

The *Sunday Times* article states that Israeli researchers have “pinpointed 'a characteristic in the genetic profile of certain Arab communities, particularly the Iraqi people.'“ This may be more palatable to westerners, since some consider the Iraqi race the enemy, and excluding other Arab gene pools might seem like a more “humane” way to carry on more studies.

Larson is even more explicit in a way that would probably never make it into the mainstream press. In a passage that would make Doctor Strangelove proud, he muses uncontrollably on the possibilities of genetically-sensitive chemicals to subdue enemy populations: “Friendly forces would discriminatingly use incapacitants in entangled situations to give friend and foe a short period of enforced rest to sort them out. By gentle persuasion, aided by psychochemicals, civilians in enemy cities could be reeducated. The adversary would use incapacitants to spare those whom he could use for slaves.” This was published in a serious, staid professional journal read by US military strategists. He concludes with the statement that “the functions of life [now] lie bare to attack.”

According to Charles Piller and Keith Yamamoto in their 1988 book *Gene Wars*, Larson's article was the first time that the subject of ethnically targeted CBWs was broached publicly, and that in “the military's private circles it was old news.” The authors further state that in 1951 the

Mechanicsburg, PA Naval Supply Depot was the site of a classified test using a benign organism delivered to personnel to mimic the behavior of an actual bioweapon: “According to documents declassified in the late 1970s, the site was chosen because 'Within this system there are employed large numbers of laborers, including many Negroes, whose incapacitation would seriously affect the operation of the supply system.'“ The black workers in the Depot were supposedly more susceptible to a strain of Valley Fever than were whites, but instead of using the actual fungal organism, a substitute was used. Valley Fever is more often fatal to blacks than to whites. It was recently revealed that the truth and reconciliation hearings in South Africa had presented witnesses who testified that scientists working for the apartheid regime had pursued efforts along similar lines.

Another possible example of field testing of ethnic weapons (or at least an interesting case for study by those interested in their development) may be the famed “Four Corners” virus, which seems only to affect Native Americans living in northern New Mexico and Arizona. Most reports identified or compared the disease to the Hantavirus, which killed victims relatively quickly following the occurrence of a prolonged fever and fluid which rapidly filled the lungs and asphyxiated the patient. Supposedly contracted through deer mice droppings, the mystery disease has claimed at least a dozen victims in the last ten years. The most recent outbreak occurred this last summer, coming on the heels of El Niño, which the major news media blamed for the renewed threat. Some area residents believe that the virus may have been released either accidentally or intentionally from a bioweapons cache at Fort Wingate, an army facility a few miles east of Gallup. The munitions storage at Wingate is now officially closed.

In the 28 intervening years since the *Military Review* article was published, the study of genetics has advanced to levels undreamed of by Dr. Larson at the time. The human genome project is slated to map all locations and functions of human DNA by early in the next century. There may be little reason to doubt that subtly selective and perhaps overtly unnoticeable biological agents can be introduced into a native population simply by flying over a chosen area with little more than a crop duster attached to the wings of a B52. The recent revelation that Israel may be working on their own bioagent based on well-known and tested principles may only be a psychological deterrent, but given the well-documented history of ethnic weapons, there is ample reason to suspect that the threat is not an idle one.

[4] Uzi Mahnaimi and Marie Colvin London "Israel Planning 'Ethnic' Bomb as Saddam Caves In" *Sunday Times* (London) November 15, 1998.

This is a short script that my talented audio editor friend (and co-founder of The Excluded Middle*) Peter Stenshoel and I wrote and performed together for Jerry Modjeski's radio show in 2000. Jerry asked us to come up with a fake beer commercial and we produced Bilderburger Beer. The full show and links to Jerry's vast library of incredible and very funny shows are available at archive.org, many featuring the legendary Little City In Space series.*

Bilderburger Beer!
5/10/00

ILLUMINATI CANNED BEVERAGES PRESENTS
BILDERBERGER BEER!
FROM DEEP WITHIN A SECRET, NON-ALIGNED SOURCE COMES BILDERBERGER BEER.
SINCE 1954, HOISTED BEAKERS HAVE SOOTHED THE HARSHEST THROATS AS THE WORLD'S MOST ANONYMOUS POWER BROKERS CAN ATTEST!
"NEVER HEARD OF IT" SAYS HRH PRINCE CHARLES.
"YOU'LL LOVE IT" QUIP LORD CARRINGTON, CARRYING ON WITH ANOTHER ROUND.
"IT CHASES MY MANHATTANS LIKE NOBODY'S BUSINESS, BECAUSE IT ISN'T" SAYS DAVID ROCKEFELLER.
HAND CRAFTED ONLY ONCE A YEAR, EACH TIME FROM A DIFFERENT COUNTRY, BILDERBERGER BEER BLENDS 115 OF THE MOST SECRETLY SELECTED AND INVITED INGERDIENTS TO PRODUCE A DARK TASTE AND LASTING NEW UNDERTONE OF WORLD ORDER.

BILDERBERGER BEER. YOU'LL REALIZE YOU'VE BEEN SWALLOWING ALL ALONG.

IF YOU ENJOY BILDERBERGER BEER, YOU WILL ALSO WANT TO TRY OLD BOHEMIAN GROVE CALIFORNIA HOME BREW. A GREAT AND SECRETLY POWERFUL TASTE SINCE 1872.

9 - Secret Code From Space: Alien Writing

In 1994 I first made contact with Dr. Mario Pazzaglini, the only person I ever met who specialized in "received scripts," that is, written languages that people claimed to see during UFO encounters or had channeled to them in trances etc. He carefully explained his research to me and eventually (a year or so later, after he gained my trust) shared the fact that in childhood, he had believed that he was not from this planet and spontaneously began writing in a strange language that he told his mother was given to him by "angels."

In spite of this, he grew up to become a budding physicist until his life took a turn and he gave that up for psychology. His communications with non-human friends continued throughout his life.

Dr. Pazzaglini died at his Delaware home on November 24, 1998 with a Buddhist monk at his bedside to guide him through the bardos. His partner James was very generous when I visited and let me peruse Mario's library and extensive drawings and paintings, many of which had occult or numerological themes.

Because of this, I am still interested in the subject of "alien writing," particularly because it is one of the significant ways that the human mind deals with apparent outside input of the unnatural kind.

An Introduction To "Alien Writing"
1/26/2007

Someone out there has been writing us letters for a long time. Strange symbols and printed languages turn up regularly in UFO encounter experiences. Police officer Lonnie Zamora glimpsed a strange crescent-and-arrow type design on the side of an egg-shaped craft at Socorro, New Mexico in 1964. The account of Jesse Marcel, Jr. includes pieces of wreckage that his father, Major Jesse Marcel, brought home to Roswell in the early morning hours of July 8, 1947 inscribed with symbolic writing that, if genuine, bears little comparison to earthly communication.

"Alien writing" can literally change history. The Mormon faith is based on translations of strangely engraved golden plates that founder Joseph Smith claimed to have dug up after a divine visitation in 1823. As for the authenticity of "mentally received" messages, there is reason to believe that at least some of the symbols and symbol systems described do not originate from the psyche of the participants.

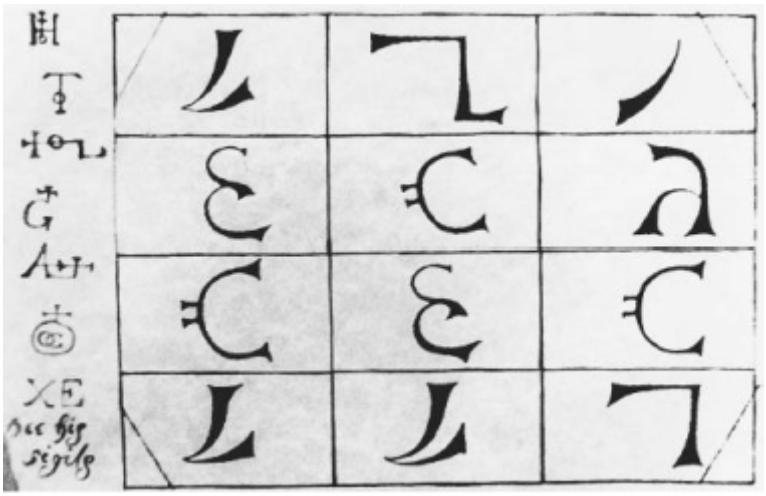
One of the difficulties in verifying the authenticity of an alien script is that if it resembles an earthly language or known terrestrial symbols, is it necessarily a "true" one? Perhaps the reason for this is that all input into a human consciousness is filtered through an individual's learning, experience, culture, and prejudice, and the messages must necessarily be rendered in a form that is understandable to the receiver as well as others. The flipside of this reasoning is the obvious possibility that the receiver might be delusional, hallucinating, or simply hoaxing the account. While it takes little skill to devise an alphabet with a one-to-one relationship to the experiencer's native language, a representational pictorial symbol system or one with no discernible grammar or syntax (at least one which seems to possess an internal logic) is more difficult to fake.

Humans receive alien writing in many ways. Some say that the symbols come from "angels" or "teachers." By far the most common method of reception is by "channeling," but the messages can also be the result of a

close encounter wherein the participant sees and remembers symbols or languages shown to him while wandering about inside (or inside what is perceived to be) an extraterrestrial craft. An early example is the case of Herbert Schirmer, who in 1967 claimed to have been taken aboard a ship near Ashland, Nebraska. On the uniforms of the beings he encountered was a symbol that resembled a winged serpent. This theme is obviously not exclusively extraterrestrial, as it was known to the Greeks and Romans, as "dragons" in Chinese and European lore, as well as to the new world cultures of Central and South America. There is the possibility that Schirmer may have incorporated it (consciously or not) into his account. An interesting sidelight is the fact that the Mayan culture held the belief that Quetzelcoatl, the feathered serpent, had taught and bequeathed to man a system of pictorial writing.

Dr. Mario Pazzaglini made a 16 year study of examples and possible sources of alien writing, and chronicled them in his book, *Symbolic Messages*. He collected hundreds of samples and classified them into distinct categories: 1) Alphabetic–consisting of 20-30 symbols, where each symbol is a consonant or vowel; 2) Syllabic–usually 50-60 symbols, where each symbol represents a consonant/vowel combination; 3) Ideographic–Usually 500-600 symbols, where each symbol represents an idea or word; and 4) Symbols–Consisting of single and complex insignia types. These categories must necessarily derive from a human understanding of representational visual systems, and in fact most claimed alien writing examples fall into these categories.

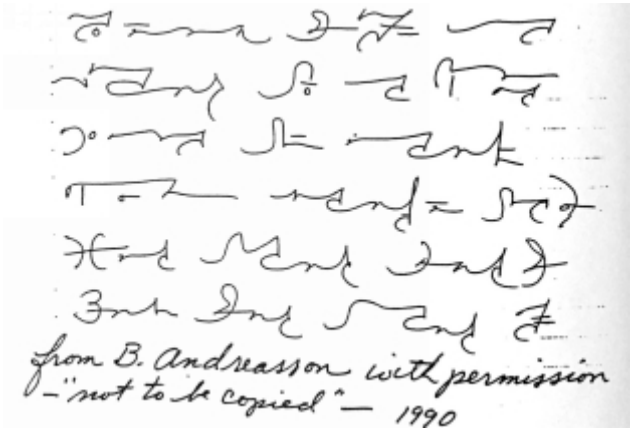
Pazzaglini conducted a limited experiment wherein participants were asked to conceive their own "alien language." The results without exception showed that, left to their own devices, people tend to concoct alien alphabets that bear a one-to-one relationship to their native language.



Enochian symbols.

In the realm of the written word, one of the earliest concrete examples of what was purported to be extra-human communication was channeled by medium Edward Kelley and his boss, Elizabethan astrologer and all-around magician John Dee, from 1582 to 1589. Dee said that an "angel" had dictated to him (through Kelley) a system of symbols to be used in a ceremonial context, and would provide the user with a higher understanding of magical and alchemical concepts than human-based writing. The system was called "Enochian," and is still in use by occult practitioners today.

It communicates concepts through the juxtaposition of symbols and their relationships to each other, and does not appear to be derived from any written language. Enochian is claimed among its adherents to affect the reader/ user on important subconscious levels as well. This aspect of alien writing has also been mentioned by UFO contactees and abductees.



Andreasson's symbols.

Pazzaglini's own alien writing doesn't resemble anything else that UFO witnesses have reported, with one exception. There seems to be a spiritual, if not graphic kinship with the scribblings of Betty Anderasson and her family, and this may explain the fascination he had with this case. Andreasson, whose abduction experiences were chronicled in the *Andreasson Affair* books by Raymond Fowler, has produced hundreds of pages of a cursive script that almost defies analysis. After comparing Andreasson's drawings to various medieval alchemical symbols, Pazzaglini was able to translate one possible sentence out of hundreds. It read: "If you want to make light solid, show it to the moon." While this probably makes little practical sense, it does make for a beautiful sort of poetry.

Pazzaglini once told me that he was in contact with leading abduction researchers who promised to send him examples of alien symbols, but he never got them. Perhaps it was because they wanted to keep the symbols secret to verify the authenticity of future claims, or maybe it was simply their egos getting in the way. Another study of alien writing has yet to be published, which is unfortunate. Pazzaglini had to self-publish his own monograph. Admittedly, the study of alien writing would make little sense to a publisher with an eye on the bottom line, but as a contribution to an understanding of extra-human experience, it should be welcomed.

Dr. Mario Pazzaglini: A Modern-Day Magus
1/09/2007

In 1994, in the course of publishing my old 'zine, *The Excluded Middle*, I read an interview in the first *Anomalist* magazine with a clinical

psychologist who specialized in the study of purported "alien writing," that is, symbols human percipients claim are products of a non-human source. This study was carried on without the general knowledge of his colleagues, which if known, might have affected his private practice and work with severe psychotics and drug abuse cases. Before I could find out how to get in touch with him, he sent me a copy of his self-published book *Symbolic Messages*. He later told me, "I knew you needed to see it."

Dr. Mario Pazzaglini was a remarkable man, as I was to find out over the next few years until his untimely death in 1998. I only met him once, at the 1997 Roswell bash. We eschewed the parades and some of the more boring lectures one day and went thrift-store shopping. Most of our talks were over the phone, and he actually provided some much-needed free therapy when I mentioned some things that were going on in my life at the time.

In 1970, he was at the Woodstock music festival, helping to run the "bad trip" tent along with a few Tibetan Buddhist friends when the hippies couldn't handle their acid. He had been a regular in the Washington D.C. insider circuit for a few years in the mid-1960s, when he was still in college majoring in physics and mathematics. "He would have made a great physicist" his brother Peter told me. In the late 1960s, he changed his mind and entered the graduate program in psychology. He earned his doctorate from the University of Delaware in 1969, and lived in the small town of Newark, just a couple of miles from the University for the rest of his life.

He later became an expert on the problems and cures of drug abuse, serving on several committees and panels for the state of Delaware, and in his psychiatric practice, specialized in treating the severest of the mentally ill. Like everything else in the late '60s, the field of psychology was undergoing an upheaval as newly-minted doctors began to explore anything that would make the job of healing faster and more rewarding for the patient. "Western culture tries to keep everything fragmented and separate, and one of the things all of us were trying to do was introduce connectedness back into the process" recalled Pazzaglini's longtime friend and psychiatric practice partner Dr. Paul Poplosky. "I think that's where some of his other interests came into play."

Those "other interests" included a cornucopia of esoterra: alchemy, cabbala, tarot, and a heaping dose of numerology. He also made enough of a splash through well-concealed back channels that our buddies in the

ubiquitous black helicopters occasionally shadowed him. He compiled a magical and symbol system of his own devising which may never be cracked. In short, he may very well have been a modern-day Magus in the guise of a mild-mannered psychologist from Delaware. This was his perspective when examining the subject of UFOs.

Self portrait of Pazzaglini with “friends.”

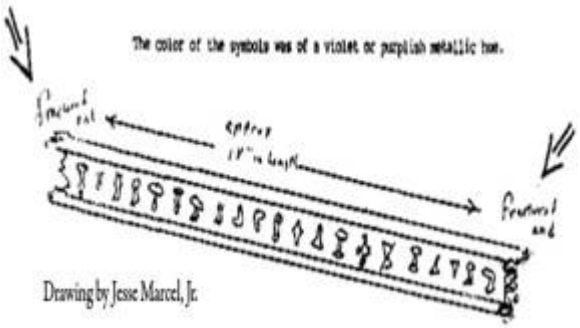
He attended a conference on UFO abduction at M.I.T. in 1992 and presented his research to the leaders in the field, but few of his friends ever knew about it. Most of the leaders in the abduction field basically ignored the subject. Almost no one knew he had notebooks filled with examples of strange symbols. Hundreds of his paintings and drawings filled his home. “I believe in his next life, he’ll be an artist” says his brother.

Jesse Marcel Jr.’s Roswell Alien Symbols
8/08/2007

In 1991, alien writing scholar Dr. Mario Pazzaglini self-published a monograph entitled *Symbolic Messages*. The book examined writing examples that supposedly came from extra-human sources. He sent me a copy in 1996, and an interview with him appeared in issue #6 of my zine.

Jesse Marcel, Jr.'s original drawing of Roswell wreckage symbols.

Recently, a drawing of the symbols Dr. Jesse Marcel, Jr. said that he observed on the Roswell wreckage appeared online. I am not sure if this depiction is from his new book, *The Roswell Legacy*, or not, but I was struck by the difference between this drawing and one that was made for Pazzaglini in 1989.



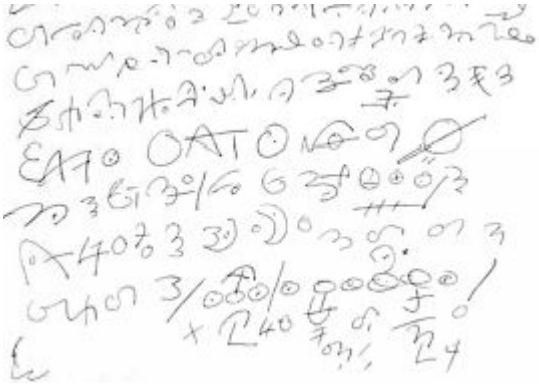
More recent drawing.

In both, he emphasizes that the characters were all a violet color, although in the undated (possibly newer) depiction, he says that they were "violet or purplish metallic." The important difference is that the symbols do not appear to be identical. The shapes are simpler and more rounded in the 1989 version. Is this because Marcel remembered more details at a later date, or added details later? Was he hypnotically regressed for the "sharper" symbols? Although it may not be legible here, one of Marcel's handwritten notes on the 1989 version reads, "Seen and copied from memory. Not hypnotically recalled." For something that Marcel witnessed sixty years ago at the age of 11, it is understandable that memories would be hazy, but this

is the sort of thing that Ufologists endlessly argue about and fundamentalist skeptics jump on.

There is little doubt that Marcel Jr. saw something unusual that late night of July 7, 1947. Someone reportedly has a drawing of the symbols made by Major Jesse Marcel, and it would be interesting to compare it with his son's efforts. I met Marcel, Jr. in Roswell last month and promised to send him examples of printed adhesive tape from the early 1950s (often mentioned by the "anti-aliens faction" as the source for the alleged symbols.) Perhaps I should ask him about this issue as well.

Recent Alien Writing Examples
10/29/2007



From Leir's site. Doodles, or alien symbols?

In his work with abductees, Dr. Roger Leir (the implant removal specialist) includes images of "alien writing," something that has been an interest of mine for many years now. Leir says some recent examples were sent to him by "a southern California abductee," which doesn't tell us much. Many of the symbols he found appear to be simple unconscious doodles, but assigning them to the "nothing but" scrapheap may be doing a disservice to both the originator and the phenomenon of "alien" languages.

The question of whether this person has actually experienced a UFO abduction or not is not as interesting as how the writing was produced. Most UFO researchers don't actually look at this sort of thing as a window into the whys and hows of the human subconscious, and how some of us might be communicating with something outside of our heads. "Evidence" is almost always looked at as a stepping stone to "proof" for unbelievers,

and weird scribbles do not provide that proof. I have heard that some abduction researchers have guarded their alien writing examples a simple method to determine if an alleged abductee is "genuine" or not. This could be a grave disservice to something that that might open doors to a better understanding of the human mind and how it copes with inner and/or outer turmoil.

The language of "angels" or "aliens" has been with us for centuries. One notable example are the symbols of "enochian," (see pg. 236) which was channeled by Elizabethan court astrologer John Dee and his assistant Edward Kelley in the late 16th century.

What these symbols may represent is an attempt by the mind to put abstract concepts into a form that is understandable through something that is accessible to us when our earthly language and writing is not up to the task.

I have not gone through Leir's examples yet, but the first step in deciphering "received" (or in the case of supposed UFO abductees) witnessed, symbols is to determine if they are simple substitutions for letters. There is some evidence in a few examples of "alien" writing that do not bear a one-to-one relationship to the native speaker's own language, and it is on these that we should concentrate.

The CARET/Issac symbols (see next article) seen on strange "drones" and leaked online are one example awaiting study. While it is almost certain that these were made up by some earthling, it might be interesting to see if they actually spell out anything. It might also be compared with the "Klingon" language, which was invented by linguist Marc Okrand on contract from Paramount Pictures for the second incarnation of the *Star Trek* TV series.

P.S. There were accusations that the CARET symbols were a "viral marketing campaign" for the (then) upcoming release of the "Halo 3 ″ video game. This last weekend, I actually participated in playing the game, but didn't see any examples of alien symbols, at least any that even vaguely resembled the CARET writing.

Asemic Texts = Alien Writing?
7/21/2009

Let's take a minute to examine some weird ideas and engage in a bit of freeform speculation, while not claiming that any specific statement is "true."

Mac Tonnies alerted me to a site called *The New Post Literate* that showcases and examines an art style called "asemic writing." A wiki entry describes the term:

> Asemic writing is a wordless open semantic form of writing. The word asemic means "having no specific semantic content,"
>
> Illegible, invented, or primal scripts (cave paintings, doodles, children's drawings, etc.) are all influences upon asemic writing. But instead of being thought of as mimicry of preliterate expression, asemic writing can be considered as a postliterate style of writing that uses all forms of creativity for inspiration.
>
> Some asemic writing has pictograms or ideograms, which suggest a meaning through their shape. Other forms are shapeless and exist as pure conception.

Where does this put us with regard to supposed "alien" writing, where the percipient almost always assumes that symbols witnessed *do* have some "specific semantic content?" Asemic writing (at least as it is postulated by artists working in the genre and other interested parties) may have no overt meaning, but the creators are apparently trying to communicate *something*, even if it's just the voice of their subconscious bubbling up though the conscious mind, through their hands, and onto the page, canvas, or computer screen. This is one of the main ideas behind modern and post-modern abstract art. Artists use color, line, and shapes to communicate or examine how we interpret and react to basic visual inputs.

Dr. Mario Pazzaglini's rare book *Symbolic Messages* may be a fair commentary on both asemics and aliens. For many years, Pazzaglini worked with people who either claimed physical or mental contact with ufonauts, or had "channeled" messages and scripts from otherwise disembodied sources. *Symbolic Messages* is composed of about half commentary written by Pazzaglini and page after page of words in alien, angelic, occult, or apocryphal languages.

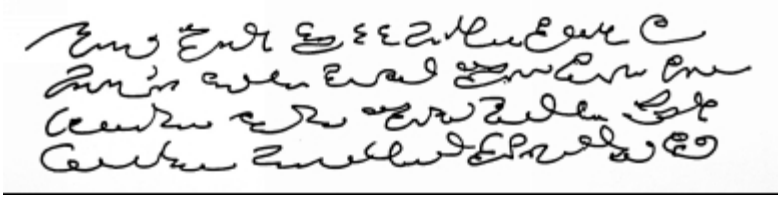
Pazzaglini acknowledged that humans are perfectly capable of making up their own inscrutable languages. One of the best examples given is the Voynich manuscript, a handwritten book from the 15th or 16th century which has so far eluded any efforts at decryption.

Detail from Voynich manuscript.

Looking at the illustrations in *Symbolic Messages*, it is difficult to determine what is being communicated, if anything, but one example, simply titled “A Cursive Script, 1990 ″ was described as working on many levels other than just simple information transmission from one mind to another.

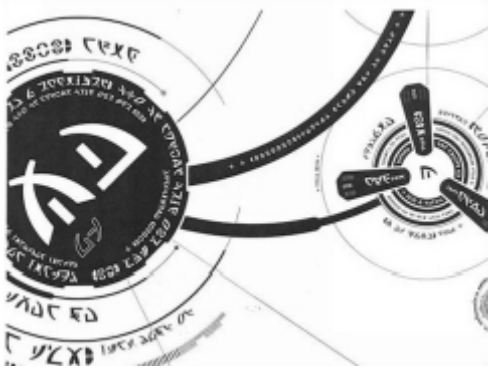
The graceful squiggles were described (by the recipient) to Pazzaglini as attempting to communicate a message on several levels. As he explains:

> [this is] an interesting script where it is conjectured that it represents a summary of: 1. The internal state of the sender 2. The intended internal state of the receiver. 3. The state of the relationship. 4. The message itself.



> Therefore, there are no, strictly speaking, repetitions of symbols but a line-symbol of interrelated states and message. This is a good example of a totally foreign (to us) kind of writing system; it would be essentially untranslatable.

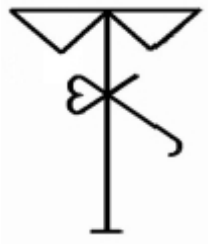
He adds at the bottom of the page: “In another example of this type, a symbol was ‘decoded’ by tracing it out and thereby ‘receiving’ a message–‘like playing a record.’”



CARET symbols.

Used in this way, written language may be much like a living (although primitive) intelligence itself, interpreting nuances of emotion and shades of meaning to communicate much more than just a mere message. Strangely, this also places it in the same general category as the widely denounced “Caret” symbols, touted by the anonymous source “Isaac” in 2007. The source claimed that the symbols themselves were part of the design of an alien device, and activated the mechanism on which it was printed, which he and a team of researchers attempted to back-engineer in the 1970s.

Could mere symbols be part of an interface between a machine and its creator or user? This idea resembles (and in some ways surpasses) the philosophy behind many occult writing systems, particularly John Dee’s channeled language of “Enochian,” as well as others like magical symbols called “sigils” and even designs used in voodoo. The symbol itself and the act of drawing it is supposed to activate forces to be used by the magician.

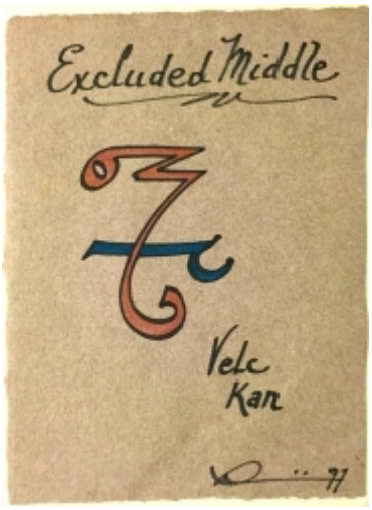


This magical sigil, for example. was created by an occultist for a specific purpose which was described as

> …a means of exerting my will to achieve a specific end (in this case, the return of stolen property)…The idea is to turn conscious desires into unconscious events, allowing that secret daemon inside our skulls to affect reality on a subtle level and, presumably, satisfy your encoded desire.

Are disembodied "aliens" using symbols to exert their wills on unsuspecting UFO/abduction witnesses? It is an idea that has been suggested by a few researchers. Witnesses have also claimed that "aliens" interfaced with their craft and other devices on a deep mental level. While in a hypnogogic state, even I once imagined endless columns of numbers that were somehow arranging to plot against me!

Maybe one of the asemic artists will wake up some morning with a hulking "something" in their bedroom awaiting instructions! More likely though, we are dealing with a phenomenon at the edge of our understanding which may be one more key to a better examination of supposed non-human intelligence, and one way that they may be sending us garbled messages, or perhaps the "messages" are just etheric junk to which we assign our own meanings without realizing it. William Burroughs said that "We may be tuning into a universal message with faulty radios." At the very least, a better comprehension of this phenomenon may also bring us a step closer to an understanding of how our minds interpret symbolic input.



Mario Pazzaglini sent this to me in 1997. It is a representation in alien writing of “Excluded Middle,” the title of my old magazine. Pazzaglini “channeled” and wrote it out, along with the pronunciation “Velc Kan.”

Thank You

Skylaire Alfvegren, Robert Brandstetter, Tim Binnall, Walter Bosley, Tim Brigham, Chica Bruce, David Hatcher Childress, Jennifer Childress, Mike Clelland, Loren Coleman, Scott Corrales, Tim Cridland, Richard Dolan, Bruce Duensing, Don Ecker, Vicki Ecker, Bob Emenegger, Adam Gorightly, Lesley Gunter, Micah Hanks, Barb Harris, Rob Harris, Norio Hayakawa, Patrick Huyghe, "Jennifer," George Knapp, Donna Kossy, Paul Krassner, Robert Larson, Miles Lewis, Mike Marinacci, Darren McGovern, Lynn McGovern, Bill Moore, Jim Moseley, Wes Nations, Beth Newcomer, Don Newcomer, Chris O'Brien, Joe Oesterle, Dr. Mario Pazzaglini, Mark Pilkington, Jayne Pojawa, Jeryd Pojawa, Peter Robbins, Miguel Romero ("Red Pill Junkie"), Richard Sarradet, Peter Stenshoel, Rob Sterling, Mick Taylor, Bennett Theissen, Kenn Thomas, Mac Tonnies, Gabe Valdez, Greg Valdez, Robert Anton Wilson, and Craig Woolheater.

Paul Kimball and Nick Redfern for kicking me to complete this project.

Also my parents, Dr. and Mrs. H.K. Bishop; my sister Lisa; and my wife Sigrid.

About the Author

Greg Bishop has been researching and writing about strange phenomena for over 25 years. In 1991, he co-founded a magazine called *The Excluded Middle*, which was a journal of UFOs, conspiracy research, psychedelia and new science. The book *Wake Up Down There!*, which anthologized many of the articles from the magazine, was published in 2000. His second book was *Project Beta: The Story of Paul Bennewitz, National Security, and the Creation of a Modern UFO Myth* which told the story of a notorious government campaign of disinformation perpetrated against an unsuspecting U.S. citizen. His third book, *Weird California,* documented strange and eerie history and locations in the Golden State.

From December 2007 to November 2011, he wrote extensively for the UFO and paranormal site Ufomystic. His article "Ethnic Weapons For Ethnic Cleansing" was rated at #13 of the most underreported stories of 2001 by the media watchdog group Project Censored. For two years, Greg hosted *The Hungry Ghost*, a radio show of interviews and music airing on pirate FM station KBLT in Los Angeles. His current interview show/ podcast can be accessed at radiomisterioso.com.

Other books by the author:

Wake Up Down There! The Excluded Middle Collection – 2000 Adventures Unlimited Press

Project Beta: The Story of Paul Bennewitz, National Security, and the Creation of A Modern UFO Myth – 2005 Paraview/ Pocket Books

Weird California: Your Travel Guide to California's Local Legends and Best Kept Secrets – 2006 Sterling Publishers